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The Gambia * **

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I. General information

A. Demographic, economic, social and cultural characteristics

1. Geographical description

1. The Republic of The Gambia lies on the western coast of tropical Africa, occupying an area of 11,295 sq km (land: 10,000 sq km and water: 1,295 sq km), making it one of the smallest countries in Africa. It is a semi-enclave in Senegal. From north to south, The Gambia extends to a maximum of 48km, though the coastline, with its bays and promontories, is 80km in length. Moving inland from west to east, the country roughly follows the route of the River Gambia inland for 480km.

2. Demographic characteristics

2. The capital city is Banjul, with a population of about 34,828 excluding suburbs (2003 census), but is exceeded in size by both Brikama (42,480 inhabitants in 2003) and Serrekunda (151,450 inhabitants in 1993).The country is divided into seven administrative areas; five regions and two municipalities, the City of Banjul and Kanifing Municipality. The five regions are the West Coast Region, Lower River Region, Central River Region, Upper River Region and the North Bank Region.

3. In 2009 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimated the population of The Gambia to be 1.7 million. However, current demographic data are not yet available and some of the data in this report are sourced from the 2003 Population and Housing Census conducted by The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, and will be updated after the next Population and Housing Census in 2013.

Table 1
Distribution of the Population by LGA, Annual Growth Rate and Percentage Change

LGA	*1973*		*1983*		*1993*		*2003*		*Annual Rate Growth Per cent*					
	Count	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*Count*	*%*	*1973-1983*	*1983-1993*	*1993-2003*	*1973-1983*	*1983-1993*	*1993-2003*
Banjul	39 179	7.9	44 188	6.4	42 326	4.1	35 061	2.6	1.2	-0.4	-1.9	12.8		
Kanifing	39 404	8.0	101 504	14.8	228 214	22.0	322 735	9.9	9.9	8.4	3.5	157.6		
Brikama	91 013	18.4	127 245	20.0	234 917	22.6	389 594	4.2	4.2	5.5	5.2	50.8		
Mansakonko	42 447	8.61	55 263	8.0	65 146	6.3	72 167	2.7	2.7	1.7	1.0	30.2		
Kerewan	93 338	18.9	112 225	16.3	156.462	15.1	172 835	1.8	1.8	3.4	1.0	20.2		
Kuntaur	47 669	9.71	57 594	8.4	67 774	6.5	78 491	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.5	20.8		
Janjangbureh	54 232	11.0	68 410	9.9	88 247	8.5	107 212	2.3	2.3	2.6	2.0	26.1		
Basse	86 167	17.5	111 388	16.2	155 059	14.9	182 586	2.6	2.6	3.4	1.6	29.3		
The Gambia	493 499	100.0	687 817	100.0	1 038 145	100.0	1 360 681	100.0	3.4	4.2	2.7	39.4		

Source: Bureau of Statistics - 2003 Population and Housing Census.

4. The percentage distribution of the population by Local Government Area (LGA) and by sex in 2003 shows a higher concentration of the population in the peri-urban growth areas of Kanifing in the Kanifing Municipality, Brikama in the West Coast Region, Kerewan in the North Bank Region, Janjanbureh in the Central River Region and Basse, in the Upper River Region. These towns are the centres of local government administration. The percentage of female in 2003 was 50.7 per cent.

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Table 2

Percentage Distribution of the Population by LGA and Sex, 2003

LGA	*Male*		*Female*		*Total Population*
	Count	*Per cent*	*Count*	*Per cent*	
Banjul	18 796	53.6	16 265	46.4	35 061
Kanifing	163 979	50.80	158 756	49.2	322 735
Brikama	195 009	50.1	194 585	49.9	389 594
Mansakonko	34 203	47.4	37 964	52.6	72 167
Kerewan	82 834	47 9	90 001	52.1	172 835
Kuntaur	37 580	47.9	40 911	52.1	78 491
Janjanbureh	51 707	48.2	55 505	51.8	107 212
Basse	86 733	47.5	95 853	52.5	182 586
The Gambia	670 841	49.3	689 840	50.7	1 360 681

5. In 2003, more people resided in the urban areas of the centres of local government administration than in the rural areas of the administrative centres. It is worth noting that the Kanifing Municipality, which is considered part of the Greater Banjul Area, has outgrown its rural areas.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of the Population by Residence, LGA & Sex, 2003

		Sex		
Residence	*LGA*	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Urban	Banjul	53.6	46.4	5.1
	Kanifing	50.8	49.2	47.0
	Brikama	50.5	49.5	34.2
	Mansakonko	48.7	51.3	1.9
	Kerewan	48.6	51.4	5.1
	Kuntaur	48.7	51.3	0.7
	Janjanbureh	49.9	50.1	2.4
	Basse	50.6	49.4	3.5
	Total	**50.7**	**49.3**	**100.0**
Rural	Brikama	49.3	50.7	22.9
	Mansakonko	47.1	52.9	8.7
	Kerewan	47.8	52.2	20.5
	Kuntaur	47.8	52.2	10.9
	Janjanbureh	47.9	52.1	13.4
	Basse	47.0	53.0	23.5
	Total	**47.9**	**52.1**	**100**

Source: Bureau of Statistics - 2003 Population and Housing Census.

Table 4
Distribution of the Population by LGA 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2003

	LGA			*Population*	*Area/Sq km*	*Density (persons per Sq km)*			
	1973	*1983*	*1993*	*2003*		*1973*	*1983*	*1993*	*2003*
Banjul	39 179	44 188	42 326	35 061	12.23	3 204	3 613	3 461	2 867
Kanifing	39 404	101 504	228 214	322 735	75.55	522	1 344	3 021	4 272
Brikama	91 013	137 245	234 917	389 594	1 764.25	52	78	133	221
Mansakonko	42 447	55 263	65 146	72 167	1 618.00	26	34	40	45
Kerewan	93 388	112 225	156 462	172 835	2 255.50	41	50	69	77
Kuntaur	47 669	57 594	67 774	78 491	1 466.50	33	39	46	54
Janjanbureh	54 232	68 410	88 247	107 212	1 427.75	38	48	62	75
Basse	86 167	111 388	155 059	182 586	2 069.50	42	54	75	88
The Gambia	493 499	687 817	1 038 145	1 360 681	10 689.28	46	64	97	127

Source: Bureau of Statistics - 2003 Population and Housing Census.

6. The Gambia Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2005/2006 Report indicates that in the 6,071 household successfully interviewed in the survey, 44,877 household members were listed, and of those, 22,072 were males, and 22,805 were females. The survey estimated the average household size at 7.4 persons. As seen in the table below, The Gambia has a youthful population, with the age group 0-14 consisting of 44 per cent and the age group 15-64 consisting of 52 per cent of the population. The dependency rate in the age group below 15 is 44.3 per cent and among children aged 0-17, 50.9 per cent.

Table 5
Household age distribution by sex

	Males number	*Per cent*	*Females Number*	*Per cent*	*Total Number*	*Per cent*
Age						
0-4	3 306	15.0	3 173	13.9	6 479	14.4
5-9	3 598	16.3	3 535	15.5	7 134	15.9
10-14	2 869	13.0	3 407	14.9	6 275	14.0
15-19	2 518	11.4	2 307	10.1	4 825	10.8
20-24	1 749	7.9	2 044	9	3 793	8.5
25-29	1 483	6.7	1 935	8.5	3 417	7.6
30-34	1 204	5.5	1 361	6	2 565	5.7
35-39	1 147	5.2	1 065	4.7	2 212	4.9
40-44	948	4.3	830	3.6	1 778	4.0
45-49	763	3.5	546	2.4	1 308	2.9
50-54	583	2.6	1 048	4.6	1 603	3.6
55-59	514	2.3	485	2.1	998	2.2
60-64	484	2.2	393	1.7	877	2.0
65-69	337	1.5	196	0.9	533	1.2
70+	538	2.4	463	2	1 001	2.2

Missing/DK	32	(-1)	18	(*)	49	(-1)
Dependency Age Groups						
<15	9974	44.3	10115	44.4	19888	44.3
15-64	11391	51.6	12014	52.7	23404	52.2
65+	876	4.0	659	2.9	1535	3.4
Missing/DK	32	(-1)	18	(*)	49	(-1)
Children aged 0-17	11386	51.6	11473	50.3	22859	50.9
Adults 18+/Missing DK	10686	48.4	11332	49.7	22018	49.1
Total	22072	100	22805	100	44877	100

Source: The Gambia Multiple Cluster Survey 2005/2006 Report.

7. Within households, about 84 per cent of the household heads are males. Rural settlements account for about 52 per cent of household heads, and 25 per cent of the household have 10 or more persons. The table below from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2005/2006 Report provides basic background information on the households, showing within households, the sex of the household head, the Local Government Area (LGA), urban/rural status, number of household members and the ethnicity of the household head.

Table 6
Household composition

	Weight per cent	*Number of Households weighted*	*Unweighted*
Sex of Household Held			
Male	84.1	5 103	5 120
Female	15.9	968	951
LGA			
Banjul	5.1	2 307	4 825
Kanifing	30.9	2 044	3 793
Brikama	27.2	1 935	3 417
Mansakonko	5.9	1 361	2 565
Kerewan	11.8	1 065	2 212
Kuntaur	5	830	1 778
Janjanbureh	6.1	546	1 308
Basse	8	483	526
Residence			
Urban	48.3	2 930	2 890
Rural	51.7	3 141	3 181
Number of Household members			
1	9.4	573	565
2-3	14	852	836
4-5	20	1 216	1 200
6-7	18.2	11 104	1 092

8-9		13.3	806	806
10+		25	1 521	1 572
Ethnic group of head of household				
Mandinka	33.7	2 043	2 068	
Wollof	13.1	793	772	
Fula	23.3	1 409	1 412	
Jola	11.6	703	685	
Serer	4.5	273	265	
Other ethnic group	14.0	805	869	
Total	100.0	6 071	6 071	
At least one child<18 years	83.6	6 071	6 071	
At least one child<5 years	57.7	6 071	6 071	
At least one woman aged 15-49 years	83.6	6 071	6 071	

Source: The Gambia Multiple Cluster Survey 2005/2006 Report.

8. A wide variety of ethnic groups live in The Gambia, each preserving its own language and traditions. The Mandinka people form the largest group, followed by the Fula, Wolof, Jola, and Serahule. Muslims constitute over 95 per cent of the population. Christians of different denominations account for most of the remainder. Gambians officially observe the holidays of both religions and practice religious tolerance.

9. There has been a drop in the fertility rates per 1,000; the total fertility rate falling from 6.0 per cent in 1993 to 5.4 per cent in 2003.

Table 7

Age specified fertility rates by 1,000 and total fertility rates, 1973-2003

Age Group	*1973 Census*	*1983 Census*	*1990 GCPFDS*	*1993 Census*	*2003 Census*
15-19	199	200	167	167	103
20-24	302	293	270	272	223
25-29	288	285	235	276	261
30-34	212	222	228	221	224
35-39	164	161	130	159	156
40-44	74	77	78*	75	70
45-49	41	40		38	34
TFR	6.4	6.4	5.9	6.0	5.4
% change	-	No change	-7.8	-6.3	-11

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics – Population and Housing Census 1973 – 1990 GCPFDS, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and Human Resources Unit Ministry of Trade and Employment. Note: * refers to 40-49 age groups.

10. There has been a concomitant drop in the fertility rates among women of all childbearing age groups from 15-49 years in the Local Government Areas of Banjul, Kanifing and the five regions (formerly called "Divisions") of The Gambia.

Table 8

Age-Specific Fertility Rates per 1,000 women, TFR, CBR, GFR Mean Age at Childbearing and Percentage - Change in TFR by Local Government Areas, 1993 and 2003 Censuses

Age Group	*Banjul*	*Kanifing*	*Western Division*	*Lower River Division*	*North Bank Division*	*Central River Division (north)*	*Central River Division (south)*	*Upper River Division*	*The Gambia*
					1993 Census				
15-19	81	119	165	209	185	217	206	211	
20-24	197	217	271	311	314	310	296	290	167
25-29	223	230	259	304	316	328	285	290	272
30-34	181	170	207	261	250	262	234	229	276
35-39	144	124	153	189	181	196	174	167	221
40-44	70	59	71	93	75	112	67	77	159
45-49	32	23	49	36	47	44	39	48	75
TFR	4.7	4.7	5.9	7	6.8	7.3	6.5	6.6	38
CBR	36.2	39.2	43.5	51.2	49.7	55.4	49.3	50.1	6
GFR	148.1	162.5	194	226.1	223.6	241.6	216.9	219.5	46.2
M	29.4	28.2	28.4	28.2	28.2	28.4	27.9	28	208.5
					2013 Census				
15-19	56	67	89	133	113	129	133	159	103
20-24	155	161	210	265	254	254	257	270	223
25-29	192	205	245	286	284	303	284	284	261
30-34	173	175	212	245	245	244	244	234	224
35-39	137	118	146	169	168	175	175	168	156
40-44	47	55	67	80	68	93	70	74	70
45-49	26	22	33	33	35	41	37	50	34
TFR	3.9	4	5	6.1	5.8	6.2	6	6.2	5.4
CBR	30.6	33.6	37.8	43	42.5	45.6	48.3	50.7	41
GFR	122.9	130.6	160.7	190.1	185.2	196.6	191.8	199.6	172.3
M	29.7	29.3	29.2	28.7	28.9	29.1	28.8	28.6	29.1
% change in TFR 1993-2003	-15.6	-15	-14.8	-13.7	-14.7	-15.5	-7.8	-5.6	-11.4

11. Life expectancy by birth for males, females and both sexes has increased, as indicated in the table below, in 2003.

Table 9
Life expectancy by birth for males, females and both sexes 1973-2003

	Year			
Sex	*1973*	*1983*	*1993*	*2003*
Males	32.2	41.3	58.3	62.4
Females	34.3	44.2	60.0	65.0
Both Sexes	33.2	42.8	59.3	63.4

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics – 2003 Population and Housing Census.

Table 10
Average Household size by LGA 1983-2003

	Average Household Size by LGA 1983-2003		
LGA	1983	1993	2003
Banjul	5.6	6	4.5
Kanifing	5.8	7.3	6.3
Brikama	8	9.2	8.3
Kerewan	8.4	9.4	9.2
Kuntaur	8.8	10	10.6
Janjanbureh	9.5	10	10.3
Basse	11.9	13.6	14.2
The Gambia	8.3	8.9	8.3

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics – 2003 Population and Housing Census.

3. Economic, social and cultural characteristics

12. Primary and secondary health care have significantly expanded, and increased immunization has reduced mortality rates. Antenatal care coverage countrywide is 96 per cent and Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) awareness is 96 per cent also. RCH services including family planning are provided free of charge. Micro-nutrient deficiencies which are a major cause of morbidity and mortality are being addressed through a nutrition supplementation programme. These and other interventions, such as increased number of births attended by trained antenatal personnel, which rose from 52 per cent in 2001 to 67 per cent in 2006, have greatly contributed to the decline of the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) from 730/100,000 live births in 2001 to 556/100,000 live births in 2006; the Neonatal Mortality Rate was 31.2/1000 live births in 2001, down from 60/1000 live births. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) was 75/1000 live births, down from 97/1000 live births in 1993. The under 5 Mortality Rate (U5 Rate) was 99/1000 live births, down from 134/1000 live births in 2001. The Obstetric Fistula Prevalence is 0.5/1000 women of reproductive age.

13. Nationwide, 20 per cent of children under 5 are underweight or too thin for their age; 20 per cent are stunted or too short for their age; and 6 per cent are wasted or too thin for their height. Children whose mothers have secondary or higher education are the least likely to be underweight and stunted, and children of women in the richest quintile are least likely to be underweight and stunted.

14. The number of children aged 0-59 months who were severely or moderately malnourished in The Gambia in 2006 were 6,386, of which 3,276 were males and 3,110,

females. While Banjul registered the lowest number, 196, Kanifing had the highest number, 1,493; followed by Brikama with 1,413, and Basse 914 of such children.

Table 11

Child Malnourishment (Percentage of Children aged 0-59 months who are severely or moderately malnourished, The Gambia, 2006)

	Weight for Age		Height for Age		Weight for Height			
	% above -2 SD*	% above -3 SD*	% above -2 SD	% above -3 SD	% above -2 SD*	% above -3 SD*	% above +32 SD*	Number of children aged 0 - 59 months
Sex								
Male	20.5	4.1	22.4	8.5	6.8	1.1	1.9	3276
Female	20.1	3.7	22.4	8.1	6.1	0.8	2.7	3110
LGA								
Banjul	17.5	5.0	17.5	6.9	4.4	0	.6	196
Kanifing	13.5	1.7	12.3	4.7	4.8	.4	1.8	1493
Brikama	16.8	2.8	19.9	6.5	8.1	1.2	2.9	1413
Mansakonko	27.0	6.1	29.0	9.9	7.4	1.3	1.2	404
Kerewan	23.7	5.2	9.5	15	7	1.6	5.0	823
Kuntaur	27.3	7.2	25.0	9.5	11.2	2.2	1.9	461
Janjangbureh	26.1	3.8	29.1	9.6	3.7	.3	1.3	682
Basse	23.6	5.0	25.9	8.7	5.6	.7	1.5	914
Residence								
Urban	14.7	2.2	14.6	5.8	5	.4	2.4	2263
Rural	23.4	4.8	26.7	9.6	7.2	1.3	2.3	4119
Age								
<6 months	3.8	.9	7.0	2.6	3.7	.8	8.1	828
6 - 11months	19.1	3.6	16.4	6.5	9.9	2.2	4.4	679
12 - 23 months	31.4	7.7	29.4	11.5	12.1	1.9	1.4	1455
24 - 35 months	24.0	4.3	25.7	9.7	4.2	.4	1.0	1323
36 - 47 months	17.2	2.2	25.0	8.4	3.4	.2	.6	1226
48 - 59 months	17.1	2.1	21.6	7.3	4.6	.4	.9	874
Mothers education								
None	21.9	4.3	24.5	9.2	6.6	1.1	2.4	4788
Primary	19.7	3.5	18.5	7.8	6.8	.8	1.6	697
Secondary+	12.4	1.6	14.6	3.8	5.4	.5	2.3	902
Wealth Index quintiles								
Poorest	25.9	6.4	30.4	11.6	7.3	1.2	2.4	1492
Second	23.1	3.9	27.5	10.3	7.5	1.4	3.0	1296
Middle	21.1	3.2	21.3	7.5	7.4	1.1	2.1	1309
Fourth	15.6	2.9	18.0	5.8	4.3	.7	2.0	1220
Richest	13.5	2.2	11.5	5	5.2	.2	1.9	1070
Ethnic group of head of household								
Mandinka	21.3	3.9	23.6	8.4	7.1	1.3	1.7	2209
Wollof	18.7	2.5	22.7	8.4	5.5	.3	2.5	863
Fula	21.2	4.4	23.2	8.7	6.3	1.0	2.8	1440
Jola	17.8	2.9	20.5	8.3	7.9	1.5	3.4	591
Serer	21.5	4.9	22.4	8.9	5.6	.0	2.4	210
Other ethnic group	19.6	4.5	19.8	7.3	5.3	.6	2.1	1074
Total	20.3	3.9	22.4	8.3	6.4	1.0	2.3	6386

*MICS indicator 6; MDG indicator 4

**MICS indicator 7

***MICS indicator 8

15. The infant mortality rates in The Gambia in 2006 were 99 for males and 86 for females. The under-5 mortality rates were 140 for males and 122 for females. The highest infant and under-5 mortality rates were in Kuntaur and the lowest in Brikama, in the West Coast Region. The rates were higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas and among

the poorest in the wealth index quintiles, the Fula tribe registered the highest, most of whom live in the Upper River Region. The total infant and under-5 mortality rates of 93 and 131 per 1,000 respectively, however, represent an impressive fall in the mortality indicator.

Table 12
Child Mortality-Infant and Child mortality rate 2006

	*Infant mortality rate**	*Under-5 mortality rate***
Sex		
Male	99	140
Female	86	122
LGA		
Banjul	88	122
Brikama	76	1..
Mansakonko	104	154
Kerewan	90	126
Kuntaur	124	195
Janjanbureh	1.9	166
Basse	121	188
Residence		
Urban	77	96
Rural	102	150
Mothers education		
None	97	140
Primary	94	133
Secondary+	54	66
Wealth Index quintiles		
Poorest	106	158
Second	97	139
Middle	101	148
Fourth	88	121
Richest	58	72
Ethnic Group of Head of household		
Mandinka	97	140
Wollof	82	111
Fula	1..	146
Jola	77	1.2
Serer	56	69
Other ethnic group	95	136
Total	93	131

* MICS indicator 2; MDG indicator 14.
**MICS indicator 1; MDG indicator 13

16. The percentage of women of childbearing age using contraception or whose partners are using contraception nation-wide is 17.5 per cent. The percentage of young women aged 15 to 24 who had high risk sex in the previous year and who used a condom at the last high risk sex in The Gambia in 2006.

Condom use at last high-risk sex

17. HIV/AIDS: In 2004 the prevalence rate for HIV-1 was estimated to be 2.1 per cent of the population and 1.0 per cent for HIV-2, according to the Annual Gambia HIV Sentinel Surveillance in Antenatal Clinic Results, 2005, 2006. In the 2007 sentinel survey a downward trend was observed, with HIV-1 incidence of 1.2 per cent and HIV-2 incidence of 0.9 per cent. There are more females, 54 per cent, with HIV/AIDS than males, 46 per cent. The low prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS has resulted in its invisibility for many Gambians as they have not been directly affected by the disease, which has created a challenge for the reduction and reversal of the trend. However, UNAIDs supported by NGOs and the National AIDS Secretariat and The Gambia National Association of AIDS Societies, the umbrella body organization, gives support to people living with HIV/AIDS. Advocacy programmes on HIV are supported countrywide and the provision of antiretroviral therapy is available countrywide. In addition to the health sector programme, traditional medicine is also incorporated including the HIV/AIDS treatment. Women's groups are also represented on all key policy structures such as the National AIDS Council, Country Coordinating Mechanism and Regional AIDS Committee, thus enabling them to influence policy at those levels.

18. Tuberculosis (TB) case detection has risen from 64 per cent in 2006 to 78 per cent in 2008, with an increase in the number of TB patients found to be infected by HIV. The cure rate for TB rose from 67 per cent in 2003 to 78 per cent in 2008 and treatment success rate for bath TB and HIV rose from 67 per cent (baseline) to 84 per cent in 2008. A nationwide TB prevalence survey is planned to get support in the next round of the Global Fund.

19. The 10 major causes of death in The Gambia are malaria, diarrhoea, pneumonia, malnutrition, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, road traffic accidents, hemorrhage, eclampsia/pregnancy induced hypertension (P/H) and endocrine disorders (diabetes).

Economy

20. The Gambia has no commercially exploitable mineral resources, although deposits of petroleum have been identified. The per capita income in 2008 was US$ 390, one of the lowest in the world. The Gambia heavily depends on peanut exports; however, tourism is also an important source of foreign exchange, contributing about 12 per cent of the GDP, as are remittances sent home by Gambians living abroad.

21. The Gambia is among the poorest countries in the world, ranking 151 out of 169 in the United Nations Development Programmes Human Development Index (HDI) for 2010. However, there are indications of a slight decrease in poverty since 1994, when The Gambia launched its first strategy for Poverty Alleviation. In 1998, about 69 per cent of the population lived on less than US$ 1 a day, decreasing in 2003 to 58 per cent, according to the Integrated Household Survey. Poverty is higher in the rural than in the urban areas, with Banjul, Kanifing Municipality and the West Coast Region having the lowest poverty rates in 2003, that is, 7.6 per cent Banjul, 37.6 per cent in the Kanifing Municipality and 56.7 per cent in the West Coast Region. The poverty rates in the Central River Region were higher in 2003, the north of the Region having 94.0 per cent and the south 75.7 per cent. The national average dropped from 69 per cent in 1998 to 58.0 per cent 2003 and further down to 55.5 per cent in 2008.

22. The 2010 Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) conducted for the United Nations Development Programme for the 2010 Human Development Report calculated that 34 per cent of the population lives below the $1.25/day poverty line and 57 per cent lives below the $2/day poverty line, with an estimated national poverty line at 61 per cent in 2010.

Table 13
Overall Poverty Rates by Region, 1998 and 2003

Region/Municipality	*1998*	*2003*	*2008*
Banjul	50	7.6	
Kanifing Municipality	53	37.6	
West Coast Region	69	56.7	
Lower River Region	80	62.6	
North Bank Region	80	69.8	
Central River Region – North	74	96.0	
Central River Region – South	74	75.7	
Upper River Region	80	67.9	
National Average	69	58.0	55.5

Source: Government of The Gambia, 1998; 2003 & Integrated Household Survey and the 2008 Poverty Assessment.

23. Among the few sources of data on poverty in The Gambia are poverty surveys conducted in 1992 and 1998 and the 2003/04 Integrated Household Survey, which standardized the methodologies used in the 1992 and 1998 surveys. In 2008 the Government and the World Bank conducted a poverty assessment simulation exercise, and in 2010 the UNDP commissioned the University of Oxford to conduct the 2010 Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for its Human Development Report, using 10 indicators to measure poverty in three dimensions, that is, education, health and living standards. The analysis used data from the 2005/2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey.

24. As regards the definition of the poverty line in The Gambia, a person (or household) is considered poor if the person's (or household's) income cannot acquire a standard basket of goods and services. The value of this basket constitutes the poverty line.

25. Poverty is determined according to (a) the type of employment of household heads; (b) place of residence; (c) educational attainment of the household heads; (d) gender of the household head; and (e) the size of the household. The tables below give the distribution of poverty according to the above determinants.

Table 14
Distribution of Poverty per sector of Employment of Household Heads, 2008 (%)

Sector of Employment	*Poverty Headcount Ratio*	*Share of the Poor Population (%)*	*Share of the Entire population (%)*
Agriculture & Fishing	76.4	63.0	51.6
Manufacturing & Energy	50.0	3.4	7.5
Construction	63.6	10.5	4.0
Trade, Hotels & Restaurants	48.8	3.8	17.7

Transport & Communication	52.4	3.4	5.0
Financial Management	49.2	4.2	1.5
Social & Personal services	45.4	7.0	12.4

Source: 2008 Poverty Assessment Report.

26. The table above shows that poverty is highest among heads of households in agriculture and fishing, accounting for almost 52 per cent of the working population, and lowest in household heads employed in social and personal services, which are mainly in urban areas.

Table 15
Poverty by Place of Residence, 2008

	Poverty Headcount Ratio	*Share of the Poor Population (%)*	*Share of the Entire Population*
Total	58.0		
Urban	39.6	23.7	46.7
Rural	67.8	76.3	65.3

Source: 2008 Poverty Assessment Report.

27. The fact that over three quarters of Gambians working in agriculture are poor explains the above large urban- rural differential in the poverty rates.

Table 16
Poverty by Education Level of Household Head (Upper Poverty Line)

	Poverty Headcount Ratio	*Share of the Poor Population (%)*	*Share of the Entire Population (%)*
Level of education	58.0		
None	63.5	82.5	75.3
Primary	47.2	3.3	4.0
Middle school	54.0	0.8	1.0
Secondary or Vocational	36.0	8.0	12.08
Tertiary	31.4	1.5	2.7

Source: 2008 Poverty Assessment Report.

28. Educational attainment of the household head is another important determinant of poverty, the rates being lower in households whose heads have attained higher levels of education.

Table 17
Poverty by Gender of Household Head, 2003

	Gender	*Estimates based on lower poverty line (%)*
Poverty Index Headcount	**Male**	34.8
	Female	53.5
Poverty Gap	**Male**	11.6
	Female	22.2
Poverty Severity	**Male**	5.6
	Female	11.9

Source: 2003 Integrated Household Survey.

29. Households headed by females are more likely to be poor than those headed by males as indicated below.

Table 18
Poverty by Demographic Composition (Upper Poverty Line) 2008

	Poverty Headcount Ratio	*Share of the Poor Population (%)*	*Share of the Entire Population (%)*
Upper Poverty Line	58.0		
Number of children 0-6 years old			
None	35.3	11.2	18.4
1	39.1	13.4	19.8
2	58.4	20.2	20.0
3 or more household size	76.6	55.3	41.8
1	7.2	0.1	0.7
2	11.2	0.2	1.1
3	15.6	0.8	2.9
4	25.3	1.7	3.9
5	35.6	3.6	5.8
6	40.5	4.9	7.0

Source: Poverty Assessment Report 2008.

30. The larger the household size, the higher the likelihood of poverty, with rural areas having larger households.

31. The Government of The Gambia is committed to reducing poverty and has formulated a development strategy and investment programme for 2012 to 2015, called the Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE), which is the successor to the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme II (PSRP II). As indicated by its name, PAGE's main objective is to accelerate growth and employment, thereby reducing poverty and improving the well-being of the population.

32. The GDP at constant 2004 prices in million Gambian dalasis is as follows:

2004	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
17 380 980	17 225 590	17 505 182	18 322 591	19 346 072	20 557 898	21 806 922

33. The table below gives the Annual Real GDP Growth rates by sector, with agriculture accounting for approximately a third of GDP (US$ 320 as per 2009 UNDP Human Development Report). The economy is largely agriculture driven, contributing about 24 per cent to GDP and employing 75 per cent of the active labour force.

Table 19
Annual Real GDP Growth rates by sector, 2005-2010

	2004	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*EST*
GDP	-	- 0.9%	1.6%	4.7%	5.6%	6.3%	6.1%	
Agriculture	-	-2.30%	-14.6%	-2.9%	28.6%	13.5%	12.1%	
Industry	-	2.3%	3.5%	-0.9%	2.8%	1.5%	5.1%	
Services	-	0.8%	8.2%	7.2%	0.2%	6.6%	2.4%	

34. The annual inflation rate in The Gambia has fluctuated over the past six years, with a drop from 6.19 per cent in July 2010 to 3.95 per cent in July 2011. The annual average as at July 2011 stood at 5.2 per cent.

Table 20
The Gambia: Annual Inflation Rate (Point-to-point), 2006-2011

	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*
				7.0		
January	4.0	2.0	5.1		3.57	5.01
February	2.8	2.1	5.0	7.0	3.77	5.42
March	3.8	4.2	3.1	6.7	3.97	5.41
April	2.7	6.3	1.4	6.3	4.10	5.54
May	2.7	6.6	1.3	5.9	4.14	5.47
June	2.2	6.4	2.2	5.4	4.49	5.39
July	1.5	6.3	3.8	4.0	6.19	3.95
August	1.4	6.4	5.0	3.0	6.13	
September	1.3	6.0	6.3	2.3	6.23	
October	1.1	6.0	6.6	2.3	6.23	
November	0.8	6.0	6.6	2.6	5.88	
December	0.4	6.0	6.8	2.7	5.79	
Annual ave.	2.1	5.4	4.5	4.6	5.0	

Source: Gambia Bureau of Statistics.

35. There has been an overall increase in the national consumer price index for the low income population in Banjul and the Kanifing Municipality, with the highest in food and drink, rising from 105.57 in December 2006 to 143.43 in July 2011 and, the lowest in health, from 100.60 in December 2006 to 101.93 in July 2011. Figures for the five regions are not yet available.

Table 21

National Consumer Price Index for the Low Income Population in Banjul & Kanifing Municipality 2004-2011

		Food and Drink	*Housing, fuel & Lighting, etc.*	*Clothing, Textile & Footwear*	*Furnishing H/H Equipment*	*Transportation*	*Newspapers, Books & Stationery*	*Alcohol, Beverage, Naco & Tobacco*	*Recreation Health & Culture*	*Education*	*Hotels, Cafes & Restaurants*	*Communication*	*Miscellaneous*	*All Item Index*	*% Change from same period last year*
Weights		54.7	3.4	11.2	5.2	4.4	7.1	0.7	1.2	1.5	1.5	0.4	2.9	5.8	100.0	
2006	Jan	104.51	109.81	101.64	104.97	113.83	109.17	100.95	100.38	101.68	101.71	104.38	100.03	102.75	104.75	3.98
	Feb	104.54	110.35	101.98	105.14	113.86	109.16	101.06	100.39	102.00	101.71	103.50	100.03	102.86	104.82	2.79
	Mar	104.64	110.58	102.06	105.24	113.87	109.17	101.38	100.40	102.00	101.71	103.56	100.03	103.30	104.93	3.61
	Apr	104.79	110.89	102.12	105.34	114.08	109.18	101.74	100.43	102.22	101.71	103.57	100.04	103.43	105.06	2.74
	May	104.91	110.89	102.27	105.45	114.08	109.19	101.76	100.46	102.23	101.71	103.63	100.04	103.46	105.15	2.66
	Jun	104.96	111.27	102.41	105.49	114.08	109.21	102.01	100.46	102.23	101.71	103.64	100.04	109.47	105.22	2.24
	Jul	105.03	111.66	102.53	105.59	114.08	109.22	102.03	100.54	102.45	101.71	103.80	100.05	103.48	105.29	1.53
	Aug	105.12	111.66	102.73	105.93	114.08	109.23	102.11	100.56	102.45	101.71	103.81	100.05	103.49	105.38	1.41
	Sep	105.24	112.04	102.93	106.07	114.08	109.23	102.12	100.60	102.77	101.71	103.85	100.06	103.55	105.50	1.34
	Oct	105.40	112.04	103.04	106.27	114.18	109.24	102.26	100.60	102.81	101.71	104.14	100.06	103.82	102.63	1.09
	Nov	105.47	112.04	103.17	106.40	114.20	109.24	102.54	100.60	103.36	101.71	104.22	100.06	104.45	105.74	0.85
	Dec	105.57	112.12	103.35	106.49	114.50	109.24	102.58	100.60	103.43	101.71	104.23	100.65	104.89	105.88	0.42
2007	Jan	106.65	112.12	103.35	108.32	114.50	109.24	102.58	100.60	103.43	101.71	104.29	100.65	109.91	106.86	2.01
	Feb	106.77	112.12	103.35	108.32	114.50	109.67	102.58	100.60	103.43	101.71	104.29	100.65	110.75	107.01	2.09
	Mar	111.07	112.12	103.35	108.32	114.50	109.69	102.58	100.60	103.43	101.71	104.29	100.65	110.75	109.36	4.22
	Apr	114.69	116.79	104.16	109.31	114.54	109.67	102.92	100.60	103.54	101.71	106.60	100.78	112.01	111.64	6.26
	May	115.19	113.14	104.33	109.37	114.54	109.67	102.92	100.60	103.54	101.71	107.28	100.96	112.01	112.05	6.56
	Jun	115.15	11:J.94	104.54	109.88	114.54	109.67	103.58	100.60	103.54	101.71	107.28	100.96	112.01	111.98	6.42
	Jul	115.01	114.03	104.75	110.22	114.54	109.67	103.58	100.73	103.54	101.71	107.43	100.96	112.01	111.95	6.33
	Aug	115.19	114.19	104.86	110.34	114.56	109.77	103.64	100.99	103.54	101.74	107.48	101.07	112.07	112.09	6.37

		Food and Drink	Housing, fuel & Lighting, etc.	Clothing, Textile & Footwear	Furnishing HH Equipment	Transportation	Newspapers, Books & Stationery	Alcohol, Beverage, Naco & Tobacco	Recreation Health & Culture	Education	Hotels, Cafes & Restaurants	Communication	Miscellaneous	All Item Index	% Change from same period last year
	Sep	114.77	114.19	104.S9	110.34	114.56	109.78	103.64	100.99	103.54	101.74	107.48	101.07	112.07	111.86	6.03
	Oct	114.70	114.19	105.06	110.86	114.78	109.89	103.98	101.00	103.56	101.87	107.56	101.09	112.07	111.95	5.98
	Nov	115.12	114.25	105.21	110.50	114.78	109.90	103.79	101.00	103.56	101.87	105.56	101.09	112.07	112.13	6.04
	Dec	115.32	114.25	105.20	110.51	114.78	109.90	103.79	101.00	103.56	101.87	107.56	101.90	112.29	112.26	6.03
2008	Jan	115.38	114.40	105.29	110.65	114.89	109.91	103.83	101.00	103.56	101.87	107.60	101.09	112.31	112.31	5.10
	Feb	115.45	114.40	105.29	110.56	114.89	109.91	103.83	101.00	103.56	101.87	107.60	101.09	112.31	112.34	4.98
	Mar	116.11	114.40	105.31	110.56	114.89	109.91	103.83	101.00	103.56	101.87	108.86	101.09	112.39	112.73	3.08
	Apr	116.61	115.38	106.19	111.50	115.15	109.91	104.19	101.00	103.94	101.87	108.86	101.54	112.46	113.21	1.41
	May	117.93	115.77	106.25	111.52	118.86	109.93	104.30	01.04	103.94	101.87	109.89	101.54	112.56	113.83	1.59
	Jun	118.17	116.38	107.10	112.13	118.87	109.94	104.64	101.10	104.13	101.87	110.10	101.55	113.59	114.48	2.23
	Jul	120.78	118.35	107.14	112.34	119.97	109.94	104.64	101.10	104.13	101.87	111.42	101.55	114.01	116.21	3.81
	Aug	122.98	119.76	107.45	113.20	119.97	112.26	104.64	101.10	104.13	101.87	114.52	101.55	115.27	117.65	4.96
	Sep	124.11	119.76	110.46	113.38	119.97	112.26	104.64	101.10	104.13	101.87	114.52	101.55	121.01	118.96	6.35
	Oct	124.58	120.10	110.68	113.53	119.17	113.17	104.69	101.11	104.15	101.90	115.10	101.92	121.13	119.29	6.56
	Nov	124.66	120.30	110.73	113.59	119.61	113.38	104.77	101.13	104.14	101.94	115.79	101.92	121.47	119.54	6.61
	Dec	125.12	121.02	110.30	113.64	119.83	113.40	105.45	101.13	104.17	101.94	115.83	101.94	121.56	119.93	6.83
2009	Jan	125.42	121.07	110.94	114.83	119.92		105.70	101.77	104.36	102.24	115.87	101.95	123.91	120.13	6.96
	Feb	125.57	121.18	110.98	114.87	119.93		105.68	101.77	104.50	102.24	115.89	101.95	124.26	120.25	7.04
	Mar	125.62	121.43	110.99	114.95	119.93		105.78	101.77	104.65	102.25	115.97	101.95	124.53	120.30	6.72
	Apr	125.60	121.64	111.08	114.97	119.95		105.78	101.77	104.67	102.25	116.24	101.95	125.37	120.36	6.32
	May	125.75	122.11	111.20	114.97	119.95		106.13	101.77	104.67	102.25	116.30	101.97	125.79	120.51	5.87
	Jun	125.87	122.30	111.35	115.11	119.77		106.16	101.78	104.84	102.25	116.58	101.98	125.93	120.61	5.35
	Jul	125.96	122.40	11.46	115.45	119.95		106.26	101.80	104.95	102.27	116.73	101.98	126.22	120.84	3.98
	Aug	126.39	122.53	111.58	115.59	119.96		106.41	101.80	104.98	102.65	116.95	101.98	123.63	121.15	2.97
	Sep	127.39	122.64	111.82	115.70	119.97		106.40	101.80	105.07	102.99	117.08	102.02	126.75	121.75	2.35

		Food and Drink	Housing, fuel & Lighting, etc.	Clothing, Textile & Footwear	Furnishing H/H Equipment	Transportation	Newspapers, Books & Stationery	Alcohol, Beverage, Naco & Tobacco	Recreation Health & Culture	Education	Hotels, Cafes & Restaurants	Communication	Miscellaneous	All Item Index	% Change from same period last year
	Oct	127.96	122.64	111.82	115.98	119.97		106.48	101.80	105.07	102.99	117.20	102.02	127.15	121.99	2.26
	Nov	127.94	123.30	112.39	115.14	112.18		106.52	101.82	105.15	102.99	119.93	102.50	133.73	122.70	2.64
	Dec	128.67	129.47	112.64	116.26	122.76		106.59	101.82	105.67	102.99	120.18	102.50	133.89	123.19	2.72
2010	Jan	130.86	129.73	112.73	116.30	122.81	114.81	106.64	101.82	105.71	102.99	:I2D.43	102.50	133.92	124.42	3.57
	Feb	131.34	124.02	113.14	116.37	122.85	114.21	106.64	101.82	105.74	102.99	120.53	102.50	134.49	124.78	3.77
	Mar	131.84	124.17	113.24	116.40	122.85	114.21	106.65	101.82	105.80	102.99	120.75	102.50	134.53	125.08	3.97
	Apr	132.14	124.32	113.34	116.44	122.88	114.21	106.68	101.82	105.80	102.99	121.00	102.50	134.89	125.30	4.10
	May	132.49	14.33	113.38	116.45	122.89	114.66	106.76	101.82	105.8S	102.99	121.13	102.50	134.92	125.50	4.14
	Jun	132.96	124.61	113.47	116.56	127.23	114.66	106.91	101.83	105.97	102.95	121.21	102.54	135.15	126.02	4.49
	Jul	136.29	124.76	113.68	116.71	149.12	114.66	106.91	101.83	105.97	102.95	127.29	102.54	135.18	128.32	a19
	Aug	136.70	124.77	113.67	116.74	149.12	114.66	107.58	101.90	105.98	102.95	127.29	102.54	135.5S	128.58	6.13
	Sep	136.87	125.28	113.80	116.92	149.12	114.69	109.45	101.91	106.32	102.95	128.08	102.54	135.58	129.34	6.23
	Oct	138.16	125.65	113.86	117.45	149.18	114.72	109.46	101.91	106.57	102.95	128.60	102.57	136.83	129.59	6.23
	Nov	138.64	125.95	113.93	117.83	149.18	114.72	109.49	101.92	106.81	102.95	128.90	102.57	137.05	129.91	5.88
	Dec	139.23	125.96	113.95	117.95	149.18	114.72	109.49	101.92	106.88	105.72	130.20	102.57	137.20	1S0.32	5.79
2011	Jan	140.4	126.43	113.97	118.10	149.20	114.72	107.79	101.93	107.03	105.72	130.66	102.57	137.25	130.65	5.01
	Feb	141.77	127.92	114.01	118.12	153.01	114.72	107.86	101.93	107.55	105.72	131.99	102.57	137.26	131.54	5.42
	Mar	142.24	128.16	114.01	118.25	153.66	114.72	107.86	101.93	107.56	105.72	132.03	102.59	137.41	131.85	5.41
	Apr	142.71	128.89	114.10	118.57	154.52	114.76	107.88	101.93	107.77	105.72	132.60	102.59	138.23	132.24	5.54
	May	142.90	128.92	114.12	118.60	154.55	114.76	107.88	101.93	101.78	105.72	133.07	102.59	138.67	132.37	5.47
	Jun	143.35	129.21	114.14	118.63	154.59	114.76	108.14	101.93	107.81	105.72	133.60	102.59	141.34	132.81	5.39
	Jul	143.43	129.51	114.29	118.80	154.59	114.76	108.14	101.93	107.88	105.72	134.52	102.59	142.58	133.39	3.95

36. Government's social expenditures as a proportion of total public expenditure and GDP has increased as indicated in the table below.

Table 22
Government's Social expenditures as a proportion of total public expenditure and GDP

	2007 (Actual)	*2008 (Actual)*	*2009 (Actual)*	*2010 (Approved)*
Education	285 992	395 691	491 360	1 007 592
Health	217 068	283 047	397 853	382 480
Housing & community amenities	31 176	33 809	36 166	73 537
Social Security & Welfare	6 267	6 153	5 495	11 132
As percentage of total expenditure	22.69%	25.74%	24.90%	24.90%
GDP at constant 2004 prices (in millions of dalasis)	18 322 591	19 346 072	20 557 898	21 806 922 (Estimated)
Total Expenditure	561 492	741 300	954 509	1 518 891

37. The Gambia's external debt stock has significantly decreased, as indicated below, from US$ 676.7 million in 2006 to US$ 341.2 million in 2010.

Table 23
The Gambia's External Debt Stock 2006-2010

Years	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*
External debt (US$ million)	676.6	299.4	328	330.1	341.2
Interest payments (GMDmn)	232.2	231	153.5	153.2	136.6
Exchange rate	28.1	24.9	22.2	26.6	27.7

Source: DLDM, MOFEA; Date 21 September 2011.

38. While The Gambia's external debt has decreased significantly, the domestic debt position shows a steady increase from the first half of 2010, reflecting the Government's policy of more self-reliance to accelerate its development agenda and less dependence on external sources.

39. However, a high domestic debt is also a matter of concern for the Government, as is reflected in the debt position in the first half on 2011 indicating a significant reduction in the figures for the second half of 2010 and the first half of 2011.

Table 24
Total Domestic Debt 2008-2011

	1st Half 08	*2nd Half 08*	*1st Half 09*	*2nd Half 09*	*1st Half 10*	*2nd Half 10*	*1st Half 11*
Total Domestic Debt	4 797.65	4 674.15	4 801.01	6 991.41	7 026.15	7 897.1	2 278
Total Domestic Debt /GDP	4 410.74	4321.5	4 466.33	4 831.67	4 841.47	5 588.64	6 156.1

40. According to data from the first Core Indicator Welfare Survey (CIWS 2008) conducted in The Gambia by the National Planning Commission and The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, the economically active population constituted 64.1 per cent of the surveyed population. Out of this, about 60 per cent were working or fully employed, about 5 per cent were underemployed, 12 per cent were unemployed and 23..9 per cent were economically inactive. The highest proportion of the employed population was found in the predominantly rural areas, 93.9 per cent compared to 40.1 per cent in the urban areas, due to the fact that agriculture is the main economic activity. More males (66.5 per cent) were reported to be working than females (53.2 per cent). Of the economically active population, women constitute 45 per cent. According to a population and Housing Census in 2003, of the economically active population, 16.4 per cent are in the Fisheries Sector, 22.07 per cent in Manufacturing, 41.33 per cent in Hotels and Restaurants, 2.66 per cent in Financial Services, 6.95 per cent in Storage and Communication, 39.97 per cent in Commercial, Social and Personal Services and 43.40 per cent are in the Wholesale and Retail Sector. Women (as shown in the "Light Poverty Study, Core Indicators Welfare Study" by the National Planning Commission in 2008) constitute the majority (65.5 per cent) of the agricultural sector workforce compared to their male counterparts (47.5 per cent) out of a working population of 56 per cent who are engaged in agriculture.

41. The formal sector in The Gambia is small, consisting of just over 20 per cent of the labour force, with women constituting 21 per cent of the civil service labour force. Data on the informal sector are not readily available but women are involved in a wide variety of activities in the informal sector, including petty trading, market vendors, selling of street foods, vegetables (which they grow) and fruit, food processing, cross border trade, tie and dye, soap making, dress making, hair dressing, ice making, home help, weaving and pottery.

42. In the area of education, there has been tremendous success in expanding access to education at all levels. The Government has constructed many schools with proximity range of 3 km to provide access to education to every Gambian child, especially the girl child, who no longer has to walk long distances to and from school. Sixty per cent of children of primary school age are attending primary school. Although over the past five years primary school attendance in the Basse Local Government Area (LGA) has increased from 29 per cent to 46 per cent, it is still among the lowest attendance rates. The lowest primary school attendance (41 per cent) is found in Kuntaur LGA. Almost all (97 per cent) of the children who enter the first grade of primary school eventually reach Grade 5.

43. At the lower basic cycle, the Gross Enrolment Rate increased from 82 per cent to 92 per cent from 2001/2002-2007/2008, including Madrassa enrolment in officially recognized Madrassas. During the same period, the Gross Enrolment Rate for girls increased from 80 per cent to 92 per cent and for boys from 85 per cent to 87 per cent. In the upper basic cycle the Gross Enrolment Rate increased from 43 per cent to 65 per cent. This growth in enrolment represents an average annual growth of 15 per cent. However, the period

2005 2006-2007 2008 witnessed a drop in the Net Enrolment Rate for boys from 62 per cent to 58 per cent, whilst that of girls slightly increased, from 56 per cent to 60 per cent. The gender parity index in 2006 was 1.03 per cent at the lower basic cycle and 0.91 per cent at the upper basic cycle.

44. Although the literacy rates have fallen below the average for sub-Saharan Africa (77 per cent), there have been appreciable levels of improvements from the 1998 levels of the 15-24 age categories for men and women to 48.5 per cent for men and 25 per cent for women in 2003. One of the objectives of the National Education Policy 2004-2015 is to reduce the rate of illiteracy by 50 per cent by 2015 in consonance with the Dakar Framework for Action which promotes the creation of a literate society sufficient to contribute to the socio-economic advancement of populations For adult literacy, the trend is different, where the literacy rate is higher for men (60 per cent) than for women (42.5 per cent) and nationally the rate is 42.5 per cent.

Table 25

Primary School net attendance ratio - Percentage of Children of primary school age, The Gambia, 2006 first half

	Male		*Female*		*Total*	
	Net attendance ratio	*Number of children*	*Net attendance ratio*	*Number of children*	*Net attendance ratio**	*Number of children*
LGA						
Banjul	73.8	93	81.5	94	77.6	187
Kanifing	75.4	779	71.7	837	73.5	1 636
Brikama	72.7	969	71.3	968	72.2	1 938
Mansakonko	46.2	363	66.2	285	55.0	648
Kerewan	51.1	480	47.8	514	49.4	995
Kuntaur	36.2	310	46.3	298	41.2	608
Janjangbureh	51.1	343	64.5	363	58.0	705
Basse	48.0	513	45.1	557	46.5	1 070
Residence						
Urban	74.8	1 261	72.5	1 311	73.6	2 572
Rural	52.9	2 609	56.5	2 606	54.7	5 212
Age**						
7	35.0	736	35.6	724	35.3	1 460
8	52.8	742	53.9	736	53.4	1 479
9	69.9	558	75.5	546	71.0	1 104
10	66.0	689	68.6	744	67.4	1 434
11	73.5	513	75.5	487	74.5	1 000
12	71.5	631	73.0	680	72.3	1 311
Mother's education						
None	56.8	3 192	58.6	3 223	57.7	6 415
Primary	69.4	306	71.4	295	70.4	601
Secondary+	79.9	373	81.5	399	80.7	771
Wealth Index quintiles						
Poorest	42.6	876	46.2	883	44.4	1 759

Second	59.0	857	61.4	863	60.2	1 721
Middle	63.5	751	59.5	778	61.5	1 529
Fourth	67.6	765	68.6	738	68.1	1 503
Richest	72.3	621	79.0	655	75.8	1 276
Ethnic group of head of household						
Mandinka	63.8	1 389	66.2	1 436	65.0	2 824
Wollof	52.8	433	53.6	525	53.2	958
Fula	51.9	809	55.0	763	53.4	1 573
Jola	76.5	396	69.4	403	72.9	799
Serer	63.4	110	68.7	127	66.2	237
Other ethnic Group	56.8	733	61.3	662	58.9	1 395
Total	60.0	38.71	61.9	3 917	61.0	7797

* MICS indicator; MDG indicator 6.

** Attending primary or secondary school (NAR).

Table 26

Secondary School net attendance ratio - Percentage of Children of secondary school age The Gambia, 2006

	Male		*Female*		*Total*	
	Net attendance ratio	*Number of children*	*Net attendance ratio*	*Number of children*	*Net attendance ratio**	*Number of children*
LGA						
Banjul	55.0	93	56.8	102	56.0	195
Kanifing	58.7	783	48.3	866	53.3	1 648
Brikama	44.6	857	42.0	867	43.3	17.24
Mansakonko	25.4	2[illegible]	29.8	200	27.2	487
Kerewan	30.7	344	25.3	380	27.9	724
Kuntaur	25.5	204	15.4	221	20.2	425
Janjangbureh	27.6	264	23.4	316	25.3	580
Basse	17.1	387	12.6	472	14.7	859
Residence						
Urban	56.1	1 209	49.2	1370	52.4	2 579
Rural	29.1	2 006	23.8	2055	26.4	4 064
Age**						
13	16.8	554	16.1	678	16.4	1 232
14	30.6	482	28.3	817	29.2	1 299
15	41.8	661	43.8	439	42.6	1 100
16	49.1	508	48.9	465	49.0	973
17	49.8	443	46.4	455	48.1	898
18	48.4	570	33.6	571	41.0	1 140

Mother's education						
None	37.9	2904	32.3	3082	35.0	5 986
Primary	36.9	116	41.8	148	39.6	264
Secondary+	60.0	198	54.7	194	57.4	392
Wealth Index quintiles						
Poorest	20.5	594	14.2	612	17.5	1 207
Second	35.1	648	28.5	690	31.7	1 338
Middle	34.5	666	30.9	696	32.7	1 361
Fourth	42.4	621	36.6	761	39.2	1 382
Richest	60.7	689	57.9	665	59.3	1 354
Ethnic group of head of household						
Mandinka	43.0	1 206	38.0	1288	40.4	2 494
Wollof	37.4	354	31.5	409	34.3	763
Fula	36.4	589	26.1	669	30.9	1 258
Jola	46.8	272	45.1	370	46.0	743
Serer	47.3	100	49.0	121	48.2	221
Other ethnic group	29.5	596	25.4	567	27.5	1 163
Total	39.2	3 218	34.0	3424	36.5	6 642

*MICS indicator 56.

** Attending primary or secondary school (NAR).

Table 27

Primary School completion and transition to Secondary School, The Gambia, 2006

	*Net primary school completion rate**	*Number of children of primary school completion age*	*Transition rate to primary school secondary school***	*Number of children who were in the last grade of the previous year*
Sex				
Male	74.9	631	61.5	2 666
Female	72.4	680	51.1	2 767
LGA				
Banjul	(91.3)	27	91.3	160
Kanifing	83.5	310	74.3	1 477
Brikama	83.4	317	55.5	1 741
Mansakonko	85.7	105	40.2	397
Kerewan	58.4	163	50.4	519
Kuntaur	57.8	105	35.6	299
Janjangbureh	79.7	111	41.4	415
Basse	47.4	172	34.2	425
Residence				
Urban	84.3	462	74.0	2 304
Rural	67.7	848	43.1	3 128

Mother's education				
None	71.1	1 086	63.8	4 223
Primary	85.7	88	21.9	492
Secondary+	86.3	137	35.2	717
Wealth index quintiles				
Poorest	60.4	283	27.04	931
Second	76.1	285	45.8	1 160
Middle	68.5	253	54.1	1 067
Fourth	79.2	249	60.9	1 131
Richest	85.6	240	87.5	1 141
Ethnic group of head of household				
Mandinka	75.4	458	63.7	2 020
Wollof	71.1	182	57.3	584
Fula	65.6	248	43.2	1 075
Jola	86.6	141	54.7	824
Serer	(79.1)	46	73.8	187
Other ethnic group	72.4	236	51.2	742
Total	73.6	1 311	56.2	5 432

*MICS indicator 59; MDG Indicator 7b.
**MICS Indicator 58.

B. Constitutional, political and legal structure

45. The Gambia became independent from Britain on 18 February 1965. Following the military coup of July 1994 and the return to civilian rule in 1996, a new Constitution (the 1997 Constitution) was promulgated for The Gambia. The 1997 Constitution came into force on 12 January 1997. The Constitution guarantees a participatory democracy, separation of powers, judicial independence and fundamental human rights. The Gambia has a unicameral legislature with the National Assembly (Parliament) consisting of 53 members, 48 elected by universal suffrage, and five nominated by the president. All serve a five-year term The percentage of women in the National Assembly is currently 7.4 per cent.

46. Section 7 of The Gambian Constitution identifies The Gambia's laws as consisting of:

(a) Acts of the National Assembly made under the Constitution and subsidiary legislation made under such Acts;

(b) Any orders, Rules, Regulations or other subsidiary legislation made by a person or authority under a power conferred by the Constitution or any other law;

(c) The existing laws including all decrees passed by the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council;

(d) The common law and principles of equity;

(e) Customary law so far as concerns members of the communities to which it applies;

(f) The Sharia as regards matters of marriage, divorce and inheritance among members of the communities to which it applies.

47. The superior courts of The Gambia consist of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the Cadi Appeals Panel. The lower courts and tribunals are the Magistrates' Court, the Cadi Court, Rent Tribunal, Children's Court, Industrial Tribunals and District Tribunals.

48. Over the past two or three decades, the number of cases particularly in the High Court far outnumbered the judges available to hear them, thus resulting in a huge backlog of cases. Contributing to this backlog was the fact that most, if not all, the judges in the superior courts were on technical assistance basis from the subregion, and had to leave at the end of their contract periods, often leaving partly-heard cases behind. However, with the recent drive to address this problem comprehensively through various interventions and initiatives, including the appointment of more Gambian judges and the use of "hurricane judges" to deal exclusively with the backlog of cases, there has been an appreciable reduction in such cases. In the High Court, which has been decentralized with Divisions in three of the five regions, and where there are presently a total of 11 judges, the backlog of cases stands at 427; in the Magistrates' Court, which has always been decentralized, including itinerant magistrates, and handles more first instance cases than the High Court, there are 111 cases in the backlog with a total number of 24 magistrates dealing with them; and in the Cadis Court with 27 Cadis, there are 160 such cases.

49. While there are no specific data on the proportion of victims compensated after adjudication, it is a general sentencing policy, regularly applied, for orders to be made for victims to be compensated by those found guilty in all crimes, with the exception of murder, manslaughter, sedition and treason.

50. For any judiciary to effectively carry out its role, it has to be independent. Recognizing the fact that an independent judiciary is required for ensuring adherence to the rule of law and the impartial administration of justice, Section 120 (3) of the Constitution provides that "in the exercise of their judicial functions, the courts, the judges and other holders of judicial office shall be independent and shall be subject only to this Constitution and the law". S. 120 (4) further provides that "the Government and all departments and agencies of the Government shall accord such assistance to the courts as the courts may reasonably require to protect their independence, dignity and effectiveness".

51. Since 2006, the numbers of prisoners convicted and of those remanded and detained have fluctuated, with the highest number of convicts totalling 682, in 2009; highest number of those remanded, 414, in 2010 and the highest number of detainees, 113, in 2006. None of those sentenced to death has been executed; the last execution in The Gambia was in 1985. Table A in the annex contains details as to offences, sentences, ages and sexes of those convicted, remanded and detained from 2006 to 2011.

52. The number of police per person is 1 to 395 persons (4,300 police out of a population of 1.7 million). There are 60 police prosecutors and 12 state prosecutors.

53. The department of Public Prosecution of the Attorney General's Chambers, headed by the Director of Public Prosecution, handles serious offences. The Department has handled 64 murder cases, 50 rape, 14 robbery, 3 arson, 4 treason and 4 drug trafficking cases. The table below gives a breakdown of the serious offences committed in the various regions.

Table 28
Serious offences handled by the Attorney General's Chambers, 2011

	Murder	*Rape*	*Arson*	*Robbery with violence*	*Treason*	*Drug Trafficking*
Regions						
Banjul	2	1			1	1
KMC	16	18	3	3	8	3
WCR	22	18		2	1	1
NBR	12	2		1		
CRR	8	7				
URR	4	3		1		
LRR		1				
TOTAL	64	50	3	12	4	4

Source: Director of Public Prosecution, Attorney General's Chambers August 2011.

54. Data available at the Statistics Unit of The Gambia Police Headquarters relate to the first and second quarters of 2011.

55. Table B in the annex is a summary of crime trend analysis of 1st quarter 2010 and 1st quarter 2011. It shows a decrease in the crime cases by 111 cases with Brikama in the West Coast Region recording the highest decrease by the Kanifing Municipality (Division).

56. A total of 539 persons were involved in the cases, of which 474 were males and 65 females.

57. As indicated in the table in annex C, of the 401 crimes cases recorded during the first quarter, 1st January to 31st March 2011, 46 cases were withdrawn by the complainants; 16 of those tried were either acquitted or discharged; 70 of those tried were convicted; 4 cases were closed due to the accused being undetected; 26 cases under investigation, not been completed; 190 cases were pending trial; and 61 cases were awaiting trial.

58. Data countrywide of the number of crime cases reported give a total of 401, of which 46 cases were withdrawn by the complainants, 16 of the accused tried were acquitted or discharged; 70 were convicted; 4 cases were closed as the accused could not be detected; 25 of the cases were under investigation; 186 were pending trial; and 54 awaiting trial, being cases not yet registered for trial but at the station level.

59. A total of 525 persons were involved in the cases, of which 465 were males and 60 females. Table B of the annex gives the total countrywide crimes statistics for the first quarter of 2011 (January 1st – March 31st).

60. In the second quarter, 429 crime cases were recorded, of which 60 cases were withdrawn by the complainants; 9 accused were acquitted or discharged; 106 accused were convicted; 2 cases were closed; 28 cases were under investigation; 154 were pending trial; and 70 awaiting trial.

61. A total of 516 persons were involved in the cases, of which 466 were males and 50 females.

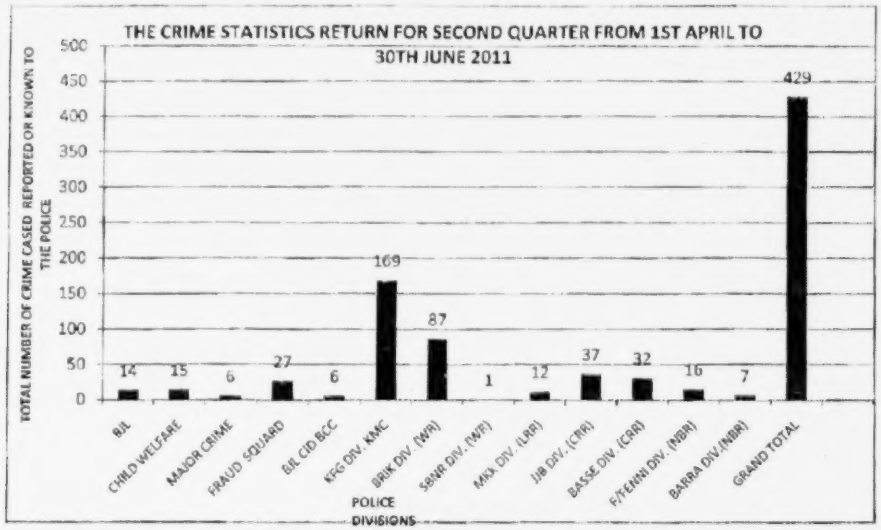
62. Table D of the annex shows a reduction in crimes from 500 cases in the second quarter of 2010 to 413 cases in the second quarter of 2011, a decrease of 17 per cent. The number of males involved decreased by 122 and females, by 33.

63. Data countrywide of crime cases recorded for the second 1uarter, from first April to 30th June 2011, as indicated in Table E in the annex and in the graph below, show a total of 414 cases, of which 59 cases were withdrawn; 9 accused were acquitted or discharged; 106 accused were convicted; 2 cases were closed; 18 under investigation; 151 pending trial; and 69 cases awaiting trial.

64. A total of 501 persons were involved in the cases, 454 of whom were males and 47 females.

Table 29

The crime statistics return for second quarter from 1 April to 30 June 2011



65. As regards cases of offences by children or by adults against children there has been a drop in the cases reported form 25 in the first quarter of 2010 to 12 in the first quarter of 2011, as shown in Table F of the annex. In the first quarter of 2010, 24 persons were involved (22 males and 2 females) while in the first quarter of 2011, 14 persons were involved (9 males and 5 females).

66. In the first quarter of 2010, 18 male adults and 2 female adults abused children, while in the first quarter of 2011, 5 male adults and 5 female adults abused children.

67. In the first quarter of 2010, 4 male children committed offences, no female child was involved: the same figures were recorded in the first quarter of 2011.

68. There has been a drop in such cases reported from 33 in the second quarter of 2010 to 15 in the second quarter of 2011 (Table G, Annex), 29 males and 4 females were involved in the second quarter of 2010, 24 males and 4 females abused children and in the second quarter of 2011, 10 males and 3 females abused children.

69. In the second quarter of 2010, 5 male children and no female child committed offences and in the second quarter of 2011, 2 male children and no female committed offences.

70. The number of traffic accidents increased from a total of 188 in the first quarter of 2010 to 203 in the first quarter of 2011, as indicated in Table H in the annex.

71. Of the 203 traffic accidents reported in the first quarter of 2011, 24 were fatal, 66 involved serious injuries, 51 minor injuries, and in 62 there were no injuries as indicated in Table I in the annex.

72. Out of the 24 fatalities, 16 males and 8 females died. In the 66 accidents resulting in serious injuries, 89 people sustained serious injuries, 58 being males and 31 females.

73. In the 51 accidents resulting in minor injuries, 53 people sustained minor injuries, 33 being males and 20 females.

74. The number of traffic accidents increased from a total of 235 cases in the second quarter of 2010 to 279 cases in the second quarter of 2011 as indicated in Table 30 below.

75. Of the 279 traffic accidents reported in the second quarter of 2011, 22 were fatal, 56 involved serious injuries, 72 minor injuries and in 129 cases there were no injuries.

76. Out of the 22 fatalities, 31 people died, 26 being males and 5 females.

77. In the 56 accidents resulting in serious injuries, 77 people sustained serious injuries, 42 being males and 35 females.

78. In the 72 accidents resulting in minor injuries, 99 people sustained minor injuries, 62 being males and 37 females.

Table 30
2nd quarter comparison of traffic accidents

Police Division	*1st quarter 2010*	*1st quarter 2011*
Banjul traffic unit	10	23
Mobile traffic unit	128	147
Brikama traffic	62	64
Sibanor division	9	nil
Mansakonko division	7	11
Jangjanbureh division	8	11
Basse division	5	10
Farafenni division	5	11
Barra division	1	2
Grand total	**235**	**279**

Table 31
2nd quarter return from 1 April to 30 June 2011 - Number of persons killed or injured

	No. of accident cases reported	*(A) Fatal accidents*	*(B) Persons involving (sex)*		*Serious injury accident*	*Persons involving (sex)*		*(C) Minor injury accident*	*Persons involving (sex)*		*(D) Non Injury accident*	*Number of case prosecuted*			
			M	F		M	F		M	F		A	B	C	D
Reckless or dangerous driving	45	14	11	3	22	11	15	4	5	1	5	1	3	1	2
Careless Driving	139	6	12	1	25	24	16	60	47	33	48	4	3	17	35

Exceeding Speed limits	10	2	3	1	4	4			5			4	1	1		3		
Inefficient breaking system	11				2	1	1	1	1			8				2		
Pedestrians careless crossing roads	6				3	2	3	3	1	2								
Driving under the influence of drink or drug																		
Animal not under control	2																	
Dangerous parking	2																	
Driving a motor vehicle which does not conform with requirements	11							4	3	1		7			1			
Obstruction on the highway	53											53				53		
Grand Total	279	22	26	5	56	42	35	72	62	37		129	6	7	19	95		

79. Tables G (Countrywide (Divisional) Crime Statistics), H (Countrywide Crime Cases Reported to Statistics Unit), I (Statistics Returns on Child Protection etc), & J (Countrywide Motor Traffic Accidents Statistics) in the annex, give countrywide returns on a yearly basis for January to December 2010.

80. All those who have applied for legal aid from the recently established National Agency for Legal Aid have received it, with the Agency presently handling 56 criminal cases in the High Court and 16 cases in the Kanifing Children's Court.

81. Section 37 of the Constitution provides for the enforcement of the fundamental human rights provisions provided in Chapter IV of the Constitution through the High Court, which may hear and determine any applications made and may make such orders, issue such writs, and give such directions as it may consider appropriate for the purposes of enforcing or securing the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights provisions.

82. The Gambia's political system is based on multi-party democracy with eleven (11) registered political parties recognized at the national level. Out of an estimated population of 1.7 million there are 796,929 registered voters eligible to vote at elections. Elections in The Gambia are based on the first-past-the-post system but without proportional representation. At the legislative elections held in 2007, the seats won by participating political parties (which are the main ones) are as follows:

APRC (Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation & Construction)	42 seats
UDP (United Democratic Party)	4 seats
NADD (Natural Alliance for Democracy & Development)	1 seat
Independent Candidate	1 seat

83. The next legislative elections were to be held in March 2012.

84. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) conducts all elections within the schedule set out by law except for a by-election in the Kombo East constituency, which was delayed due to the overhauling of the national voter's roll to a new biometric voters' register.

85. The IEC has information on voter turnouts in the administrative areas and constituencies only as seen in the table below containing the "results by constituencies" of the Presidential Election held on 24 November 2011.

Table 32
24 November 2011 Presidential Election Results by Constituencies

Admin/Constituencies	*Electorate*	*Ballots cast*	*% turnout*	*Y Jammeh*	*% Y Jammeh*	*O Darboe*	*% O Darboe*	*H. Bah*	*% H. Bah*	*Invalid votes*
Banjul										
Banjul South	6 213	4 994	80%	3 562	71%	801	16%	631	13%	
Banjul North	6 438	5 249	82%	3 649	70%	1 110	21%	490	9%	
Banjul Central	8 527	7 173	84%	5 550	77%	998	14%	625	9%	2
Banjul	21 178	17 416	82%	12 761	73%	2 209	17%	1 746	10%	2
Kanifing										
Bakau	15 921	13 621	86%	8 260	61%	4 292	32%	1 069	8%	3
Jeshwang	30 147	24 645	82%	16 105	65%	5 590	23%	2 950	12%	6
Serekunda West	44 269	35 273	80%	23 779	67%	6 520	18%	4 974	14%	
Serekunda East	54 904	44 494	81%	27 992	63%	11 352	26%	5 150	12%	
Serekunda Central	42 510	33 761	79%	20 754	61%	7 873	0	51	15%	
Kanifing	187 751	151 794	81%	96 890	64%	35 627	0	193	13%	9
Brikama										
Foni Jarrol	3 146	2 745	87%	2 379	87%	139	0	2	8%	0
Foni Brefet	7 577	6 858	91%	6 218	91%	315	5%	325	5%	2
Foni Bintang	7 776	7 244	93%	6 811	94%	247	0	2	3%	
Foni Bondali	3 449	3 153	91%	3 047	97%	28	0	1	2%	0
Foni Kansala	6 905	6 289	91%	6 194	98%	36	0	1	1%	0
Kombo East	18 858	16 810	89%	13 749	82%	1 967	0	11	6%	2
Kombo South	40 937	35 378	86%	24 949	71%	6 974	0	34	10%	21
Kombo Central	53 956	45 799	85%	31 503	69%	9 817	0	45	10%	17
Kombo North	110 132	91 029	83%	61 173	67%	18 415	20%	11 404	13%	37
Brikama	252 736	215 305	85%	156 023	72%	37 938	0	213	10%	90
Kerewan										
Lower Nuimi	21 275	18 056	85%	14 666	81%	1 548	0	18	10%	22

Upper Nuimi	12 721	11 165	88%	9 020	81%	1 029	0	11	10%	
Jokadu	9 195	8 047	88%	6 459	80%	815	0	8	10%	
Lower Baddibu	8 838	7 369	83%	4 921	67%	1 801	0	6	9%	4
Central Baddibu	8 894	7 444	84%	5 096	68%	1 713	0	6	9%	
Illiassa	19 380	15 275	79%	11 589	76%	2 811	0	9	6%	13
Sabach Sanjal	10 368	8 733	84%	7 317	84%	505	0	9	10%	3
Kerewan	90 671	76 089	84%	59 068	78%	10 222	0	68	9%	42
Mansakonko										
Jarra West	13 592	11 031	81%	7 394	67%	2 923	0	7	6%	4
Jarra East	7 295	5 902	81%	4 405	75%	1 056	0	4	7%	11
Jarra Central	3 950	3 345	85%	2 705	81%	354	0	3	9%	1
Kiang West	9 330	8 360	90%	5 947	71%	2 234	0	2	2%	1
Kiang East	4 031	3 412	85%	2 497	73%	852	0	1	2%	
Kiang Central	5 476	4 724	86%	3 331	71%	1 033	22%	360	8%	5
Mansakonko	43 674	36 774	845%	26 269	71%	8 452	23%	2 053	6%	22
Janjanbureh										
Janjanbureh	1 715	1 306	76%	1 050	80%	202	15%	54	4%	
Niani	11 893	9 721	82%	7 213	74%	1 502	15%	1 003	10%	5
Nianija	4 162	3 455	83%	2 239	65%	143	4%	1 072	31%	1
Nianija West	3 499	2 941	84%	1 967	67%	280	10%	694	24%	
Niamina East	9 399	7 952	85%	6 525	82%	595	7%	832	10%	6
Niamina Dankunku	2 755	2 297	83%	1 773	77%	102	4%	422	18%	2
Lower Fulladu West	18 106	14 655	81%	11 347	77%	2 086	14%	1 222	8%	10
Upper Fulladu West	21 886	17 780	81%	13 202	74%	3 153	18%	1 419	8%	6
Lower Fulladu West	7 712	6 421	83%	4 543	71%	204	0	17	26%	0
Upper Saloum	9 135	7 671	84%	4 765	72%	98	0	28	37%	
Samı	10 119	8 626	85%	5 099	59%	2 697	0	8	10%	0
Janjanbureh	100 381	82 825	83%	59 723	72%	11 062	0	120	15%	0
Basse										
Basse	18 799	13 716	73%	10 762	78%	1 697	0	1 257	9%	0
Jimara	19 273	14 379	75%	11 612	81%	1 522	0	12	9%	0
Tumana	14 263	11 399	80%	8 601	75%	1 895	0	9	8%	
Kantora	17 127	13 103	77%	11 478	88%	854	0	8	6%	2
Samndu	11 403	9 023	79%	6 955	77%	835	0	12	14%	6
Wulli West	9 507	7 908	84%	5 346	67%	620	0	20	25%	
Wulli East	10 166	8 101	80%	5 062	62%	544	7%	2 495	31%	5
Basse	100 538	77 701	77%	59 816	77%	7 967	0	99	13%	51
National Total	796 929	657 904	83%	470 550	72%	114 177	0	731	11%	264

Source: Independent Electoral Commission.

86. During the recently conducted Presidential Election, the IEC did not officially receive any complaint of irregularity although opposition parties complained of election irregularities in the private press following the announcement of election results.

87. Since 1994, there has been a steady increase in the number of radio stations and newspapers in The Gambia. However, so fa., the only television station in The Gambia is that of the national broadcaster, Gambia Radio and Television Services, GRTS, with a territorial coverage of 90 per cent for both TV and radio broadcasting.

88. There are 12 FM Radio Stations both publicly and privately owned. The commercial radio stations are located mainly in the Greater Banjul area and the community radio stations are mostly in the local of major towns of the country.

Table 33
Radio Stations, Newspapers and Television Services

Name	*Frequency*	*Location*	*Online*
Community radio stations			
Kerewan Community	105.7MHz	Kerewan NBR	
Farafenni Community	99.9MHz	NBR	
Brikama Community	98.0MHz	WCR	
Sinchu Alhajie	97.5MHz		
Brikama-ba	96.8MHz		
St Joseph Family Farm	88.8MHz	Bwiam	
Radio stations			
West Coast Radio 1	95.3 MHz	ManjaiKunda	
West Coast Radio 2	92.1 MHz	ManjaiKunda	
City Limits Radio	93.6 MHz	Kairaba Ave	
KWT Radio	107.6 MHz	Kairaba Ave	
Hill Top FM	104.7MHz	Tabokoto	
Janneh Koto FM	101.1MHz	Gunjur	
GRTS Radio STL	88.0MHz	Mile 7, Bakau	
RFI c/o GRTS	89.0MHz	Kanifing	
GRTS FM	98.6MHz	Abuko	www.grts.gm
Unique FM	101.7MHz	Bakau	www.uniquefm.gm
Paradise FM	105.5MHz	Kanifing	www.paradisefm.gm
VibesFM			www.vibesfm.gm
CapitalFM	100.4MHz		
Newspapers			

Observer (daily)	www.observer.gm
The Point (daily)	www.thepoint.gm
Today (daily)	
Forayaa (3xpw)	www.forayaa.gm
News & Report (weekly)	
Standard	
News & Report (weekly)	
Standard	
The Gambia Info (2xpw)	

89. The Government of The Gambia has always strived to create a conducive atmosphere within which non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can effectively operate. The Non-Governmental Organisation Act of 1996 (Decree No. 81 of 1996) establishes the Non-Governmental Organisation Affairs Agency, mandated inter alia, to serve as an administrative link between the Government and NGOs and to process and grant Clearance Certificates to prospective NGOs in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol of Accord and the Non-Governmental Organisation Code of Conduct, contained in the First and Second Schedules respectively.

90. A total of 128 NGOs have been registered, 81 being local NGOs & 29 international NGOs and 8 NGOs are in the process of registration as at 2011.

91. For an organization to be eligible for NGO status, it should fulfill the following criteria:

1. Have a constitution that clearly sets out the mission and the objectives of the organization, which should endeavour to promote the well-being and socio-economic advancement of Gambians.
2. Have an office and a postal address with at least two full time staff whose relationship should transcend family ties.
3. Have a clearly delineated administrative system and an acceptable accounting/recording system that could be audited annually.
4. Have an account in the name of the organization (recent statement to be submitted with the application form).
5. Develop an operational work plan detailing areas and scopes of interventions. There should be a budget attached to the work plan, which should indicate sources of funds.
6. Be transparent and accountable not only to donors but also to The Gambia Government and beneficiaries in its use of organizational funds, and must be willing to share activity-related reports with other interested NGOs, Government and other stakeholders.
7. Be legally constituted as a not-for-profit organization under the Companies Act at the Attorney General's Chamber and operate as a charity for a minimum period of 24 months.

8. Be non-political, not-for profit, non-sectarian and development-oriented.

9. Enter into agreement with relevant line Departments through a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU).

10. Constitute a Board of Directors of at least seven members (attach a list with contact address/phones).

11. Present an activity report of ongoing programmes of the organization.

12. Have a legal status in its country of origin if the organization is international. Thus a certificate of incorporation in the country of origin must be submitted, the address of the office provided and a list of the International Board Members including the name and contact address of the Chief Executive.

II. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights

A. Acceptance of international human rights norms

1. Ratification of main international human rights instruments

92. The Gambia has ratified all but four (4) of the following main international human rights conventions and protocols:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966; ratified on 29 December 1978;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966; ratified on 22 March 1979;
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, (ICERD), 1965; ratified on 29 December 1979;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979; signed on 29 July 1980 and ratified on 16 April 1993;
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984; signed on 23 October 1985 and ratified in April 2006;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989; ratified on 9 August 1990;
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW) 1990; yet to be signed /ratified;*
- Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2000; signed on 21 December 2000 and ratified on 9 April 2008;
- Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, 2000; signed on 21 December 2000 and ratified on 9 April 2008;
- Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, concerning individual petition, 1966; ratified on 9 June 1988;
- Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, concerning abolition of the death penalty, 1989; yet to be signed/ ratified;*
- Optional Protocol to CEDAW, concerning individual complaints and inquiry procedures, 1999; yet to be signed/ratified;*

- Optional Protocol to CAT, concerning regular visits by national and international institutions to places of detention, 2002; yet to be signed/ratified;*

*The Gambia has yet to sign or ratify these instruments but the process is ongoing.

2. Reservations and declarations

93. The Gambia has not entered any reservation to the main international human rights instruments listed under sub-paragraph (1).

94. All reservations previously entered by The Gambia to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa have been withdrawn.

3. Limitations

95. Among the laws constituting the laws of The Gambia under Section 7 of the Constitution are Customary law as far as concerns members of the communities to which it applies and the Sharia as regards matters of marriage, divorce and inheritance among members of the communities to which it applies. Customary and personal laws affect the lives of over 90 per cent of women in The Gambia and place some limitations on the application of some of the provisions of ICESCR and CEDAW.

96. For most Gambians (95 per cent of whom are Muslims), matters relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance are governed by personal or customary law, Sharia law for Muslims or customary law for a relatively few traditionalists.

4. Other United Nations human rights and related conventions

97. The Gambia is also a party to the following human rights and related conventions:

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948; date of accession, 29 December 1978;
- Slavery Convention, 1926 as amended 1955; date of accession 9 April 2008;
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951; date of accession 7 September 1966; 1967 Protocol; date of accession 29 September 1967;
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998; signed 4 December 1998 and ratified 28 June 2002;
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000; signed on 14 December 2000 and ratified on 5 May 2003;
- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime; signed on 14 December 2000 and ratified on 5 May 2003;
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; signed on 14 December 2000 and ratified on 5 May 2003.

5. Other relevant international conventions

98. The Gambia has ratified the following conventions of the International Labour Organization:

- Forced or Compulsory Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); ratified on 4 September 2000;

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87); ratified on 4 September 2000;
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); ratified on 4 September 2000;
- Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No. 100); ratified on 4th September 2000;
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); ratified on 4th September 2000;
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 11); ratified on 4 September 2000;
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); ratified on 4 September 2000;
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); ratified on 3rd July 2001.

99. The Gambia has ratified the following Geneva Conventions:

- Geneva Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 1949; ratified on 20 October 1966;
- Geneva Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 1949; ratified on 20 October 1966;
- Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 1949; ratified on 20 October 1966;
- Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 1977; ratified on 12 January 1989;
- Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 1977; ratified on 12 January 1989.

6. Regional human rights conventions

100. The Gambia is a party to the following regional human rights conventions:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; ratified on 8 June 1983;
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; ratified on 14 December 2000;
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights; ratified on 30 June 1999;
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; ratified on 25 May 2005;
- African Union (AU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa; ratified on 12 November 1980;
- Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention for the Elimination of Mercenaries in Africa; signed on 24 December 2003, and ratified on 30 April 2009
- AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption; signed on 24 December 2003, and ratified on 30 April 2009;

- AU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism; signed on 14 July 1999 and ratified 30 April 2009;
- Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism; ratified on 21 December 2000;
- Protocol to the amendment of the Constitutive Act of the AU; signed on 24 December 2003 and ratified on 30 April 2009;
- Protocol to the Court of Justice of the AU; signed on 24 December 2003 and ratified on 30 April 2009;
- African Youth Charter; signed on 24 December and ratified on 30 April 2009.

B. Legal framework for the protection of human rights at the national level

1. Constitutional protection of fundamental rights and freedoms

101. The Gambian Constitution provides in Chapter IV for the promotion and protection of human rights. Every person in The Gambia, whatever his or her race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, is entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in that Chapter, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.

102. The fundamental human rights and freedoms enshrined in this Chapter shall be respected and upheld by all organs of the Executive and its agencies, the Legislature and, where applicable to them, by all natural and legal persons in The Gambia, and shall be enforceable by the Courts in accordance with the Constitution. The rights include:

Protection of the right to life

103. The right to life is guaranteed in the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia as a fundamental human right from which no derogation is permitted even in time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation.

104. The death penalty was abolished in 1993 by the Death Penalty (Abolition) Act 1993 but reinstated in 1995 by Decree No. 52 entitled the Death Penalty (Restoration) Decree, 1995. Among the reasons given for the restoration of the death penalty were that "since the abolition of the death penalty in The Gambia there has been a steady increase of cases of homicide and treasonable offences which, if not effectively checked, may degenerate into a breakdown of law and order" and that the duty dawned on the "State to provide adequate mechanisms for the security of life and liberty of its citizenry thereby maintaining law and order and ensuring greater respect for individual human rights."

105. The application of the death penalty is limited only to murder and treasonable offences. Even with that, it can only be imposed where the offence results in death, or the administration of any toxic substance, resulting in the death of another person. Thus, the fact that the death penalty is limited to these offences means it is quite an exceptional measure meant for "most serious crimes". The courts have imposed death sentences on accused persons convicted of murder since 1995 but none is executed yet.

106. Furthermore, Gambian law prescribes that the procedural guarantees, including the right to a fair hearing by an independent tribunal, the presumption of innocence, the minimum guarantees for the defence, and the right to review by a higher tribunal prescribed

must be observed before the death penalty can be imposed. These rights are applicable in addition to the particular right to seek pardon or commutation of the sentence.

Protection from torture and inhuman treatment

107. The prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading punishment or other treatment is absolute in that even in situations of public emergency this provision is non-derogable. Even though the Constitutional prohibition of torture is not yet supported by the creation of a specific offence of torture under the country's criminal law, the offences in the Criminal Code such as threatening violence, common assault, assault causing actual bodily harm, assault causing grievous bodily harm and laws and regulations such as the Judges Rules and the Evidence Act have also been put in place to give effect to the prohibition of torture.

Protection of the right to personal liberty

108. The Gambian Constitution guarantees "every person" the right to liberty and security of person. This means the right to personal liberty and security of person is applicable to all deprivations of liberty, whether in criminal cases or in other cases such as, mental illness and immigration control.

109. It is prohibited under the Constitution to subject anyone to arbitrary arrest or detention and no one is to be deprived of his or her liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedures as are established by law.

110. The Constitution provides further that any person who is arrested or detained shall be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable and in any case within three hours, in a language that he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest or detention and of his or her right to consult a legal practitioner. Persons who are arrested or detained for the purpose of bringing them before a court in execution of the order of a court or upon reasonable suspicion of them having committed, or being about to commit a criminal offence must be taken to court within seven-two hours as required by the Constitution.

111. The Constitution also requires that a person brought before a court in execution of the order of a court shall not thereafter be further held in custody in connection with those proceedings or that offence save upon the order of a court. Persons arrested or detained who are not tried within a reasonable time must be released either unconditionally or upon certain conditions as are reasonably necessary to ensure that they appear at a late date for trial. Criminal cases are also to be dealt with within a reasonable time.

112. The Constitution further provides that any person who is unlawfully arrested or detained by any other person shall be entitled to compensation from that other person or from any other person or authority on whose behalf that other person was acting. The Constitution also directs the judiciary to take into consideration the time spent in prison before conviction when setting jail terms for convicted persons.

Freedom of speech

113. The Gambian Constitution guarantees every person "the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media; freedom of thought, conscience and belief, which shall include academic freedom; freedom to petition the Executive for redress of grievances and to resort to the Courts for the protection of his or her rights."

114. The 1997 Constitution also introduced a special chapter on the media by providing, *inter alia*, that "the freedom and independence of the Press and other information media are hereby guaranteed." This chapter provides, *inter alia*, that the Press and other information media shall, at all times, be free to uphold the principles, provisions and objectives of the

Constitution, and the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people of The Gambia and that "all state owned newspapers, journals, radio and television shall afford fair opportunities and facilities for the presentation of divergent views and dissenting opinion."

115. The Gambia is committed to the creation of a conducive environment for the media to operate freely and to ensure a free flow of information as provided for in the Constitution. Consequently, the Information Act was passed into law in May 2009 to provide for the restructuring, development and regulation of the information and communications sectors in The Gambia.

116. The right to freedom of expression is, however, not absolute. In addition to the limitations to the rights enshrined in the Constitution the Criminal Code creates the offences of criminal libel and sedition. Civil libel is also regulated by the common law and is therefore applicable in The Gambia by virtue of section 3 of the Law of England Application Act and section 7 of the Constitution.

Other constitutional guarantees

117. Other guarantees in the Constitution are protection from slavery and forced labour; protection from deprivation of property; right to fair trial; right to privacy; freedom of conscience; freedom of association; freedom of assembly; freedom of movement; political rights; right to marry; rights of women; rights of children; right to education; rights of the disabled; cultural rights; protection from discrimination.

118. These fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed in the Constitution are, however, not absolute. They are to be exercised "subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others" and "subject to the law of The Gambia in so far as that law imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the rights and freedoms thereby conferred, which are necessary in a democratic society and are required in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of The Gambia, national security, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court."

119. Another general limitation on the exercise of these rights is the declaration of a state of emergency under section 34 of the Constitution. Section 34 of the Constitution empowers the President to declare a state of emergency, and the National Assembly may pass an Act authorizing the taking during a state of emergency of measures that are reasonably justifiable for dealing with the situation and nothing done under such Act shall be held to be inconsistent with sections 19, 23, 24 (other than subsections (5) to (8) thereof) or 25 of the Constitution to the extent that it is reasonably justifiable in the circumstances arising or existing during a period of public emergency for the purpose of dealing with the situation. Section 36 outlines how persons detained during a state of emergency should be treated.

120. In addition to Chapter IV, section 39 of the Constitution also guarantees the right to vote.

121. Chapter XX also provides for directive principles of state policy. This Chapter outlines the duties of citizens and further spells out the Government's economic, social, cultural, educational, political and foreign relations objectives. Even though these principles do not confer legal rights, all organs of government are guided by and observe them with a view to achieving by legislation or otherwise the full realization of the principles.

2. Human rights treaties incorporated into the national legal system

122. In addition to the constitutional promotion and protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms under Chapter IV of the Gambian Constitution, which covers most of

the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the ICCPR and the ICESCR, and specific legislation addressing human rights issues such as the right to food, the right to work and the right to water. The Gambia has enacted laws incorporating the following human rights treaties into the national legal regime:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa both domesticated by the Women's Act, 2010;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; domesticated by the Children's Act, 2005 and the Tourism Offences Act, 2003;
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000, and its Protocols against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air, and to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children; domesticated by the Children's Act (Sections 39 & 40) and the Trafficking in Persons Act, 2007;
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951, and its 1967 Protocol, and the AU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa; domesticated by the Refugee Act, 2008;
- Forced or Compulsory Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (no. 87); Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); Equal Remuneration Convention 1951 (No. 100); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 108); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. III); domesticated by the Labour Act, 2007;
- Minimum Age Convention; 1973 (No. 138) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (No. 182); domesticated by the Children's Act, 2005.

3. Authorities involved in human rights matters

i) The Courts

123. The superior courts of The Gambia consist of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the Cadi Appeals Panel. The lower courts and tribunals are the Magistrates' Court, the Cadi Court, Rent Tribunal, Children's Court, Industrial Tribunals and District Tribunals.

124. Section 37 of the Constitution provides for the enforcement of the fundamental human rights provisions provided in Chapter IV of the Constitution through the High Court which may hear and determine any applications made and may make such orders, issue such writs, and give such directions as it may consider appropriate for the purposes of enforcing or securing the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights provisions mentioned above.

ii) The Ombudsman

125. Even though The Gambia does not have a National Human Rights Commission, section 163 of the Constitution provides for the Office of the Ombudsman. The Constitution empowers the Ombudsman to investigate allegations of maladministration, mismanagement or discriminatory practices in any government department, authority, or other public body. The Ombudsman Act of 1997 further empowers the Ombudsman to:

(a) Investigate complaints of injustice, corruption, abuse of power and unfair treatment of any person by a public officer in the exercise of official duties; and

(b) Investigate complaints concerning the functioning of the Public Service Commission, the administrative and security organs of the State, the Police and Prisons Service in so far as the complaints relate to the failure to achieve a balanced structuring of those services or equal access by all to the recruitment to those services or fair administration in relation to those services.

126. The Ombudsman or his or her deputy is subject only to the Constitution and the law and is not subject to the direction and control of any person or authority. In performing his or her duties, the Ombudsman and his or her members of staff enjoy immunity from civil and criminal processes and all Government departments and authorities are enjoined to give such assistance as the Ombudsman may require for the protection of his or her independence, dignity and effectiveness.

iii) The Gambia Police Force

127. The Gambia Police Force is a law enforcement agency which has the function of the preservation of law and order, the protection of property, the prevention and detection of crime, the apprehension of offenders and the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are charged. In performing all these functions, the police deal directly and indirectly with many human rights issues.

iv) National Council for Civic Education

128. Civic education in The Gambia is a process through which the citizenry acquires knowledge, skills and values that are needed for effective democratic citizenship. It was against this background and the need to promote the civic consciousness of the citizens that the National Council for Civic Education (NCCE) was created under section 198 of the Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia, 1997 as an independent and non-partisan institution. Section 199(1) of the said Constitution outlines the mandate of NCCE as follows:

(a) To create and sustain within society an awareness of the principles and objectives of this Constitution as the fundamental law of The Gambia;

(b) To educate and encourage the public to defend this Constitution against all forms of abuse and violence;

(c) To formulate, from time to time, for the consideration of the Government programmes at national and district levels aimed at realising the objects of this Constitution;

(d) To formulate, implement and oversee programmes aimed at inculcating in the citizens of The Gambia awareness of their civic and fundamental rights, duties and responsibilities;

(e) To educate the citizens of The Gambia about international, regional and subregional matters relevant to The Gambia.

129. The independence of the NCCE has been protected in the Constitution. It states under section 199(3) that "in the exercise of its functions, the Council shall be apolitical and, save as may be provided by an Act of the National Assembly, shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority".

v) The National Women's Council

130. In 1980, the National Women's Council and the National Women's Bureau were established by the National Women's Council Act. The Council's main mandate under that Act was "to advise government on all matters affecting the development and welfare of women and any other matters referred to it by the minister..." In its bid to incorporate into the laws of The Gambia the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and those of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, Government felt it necessary to repeal the National Women's Council Act and enact the Women's Act, 2010 giving legal effect to the provisions of the two treaties and the National Policy for the advancement of Gambian Women and Girls.

131. The mandate of the National Women's Council and its administrative Bureau has been significantly extended under the Women's Act to include, inter alia, ensuring "that the budget and appropriation issues of the Government, Local Government Authorities and other public bodies and institutions comply with the gender policy of the Government", monitoring "the compliance [with the] Act through annual reports from all Government and public institutions to the Bureau"; and "... the preparation of the periodic reports under the Convention, [CEDAW] on behalf of Government, for submission to the Convention Committee".

vi) Independent Electoral Commission

132. The Independent Electoral Commission is responsible for the conduct and supervision of the registration of voters for all public elections and the conduct and supervision of all public elections and referenda; the conduct of the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker; the registration of political parties; ensuring that the dates, times and places of public elections and referenda are determined in accordance with law and that they are gazetted and elections held accordingly and ensuring that candidates in elections make full declaration of their assets at the time of nomination. The Gambian Constitution provides that in the exercise of its functions under the Constitution or any other law, the Independent Electoral Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

vii) Department of Social Welfare

133. The Social Welfare Department of The Gambia operates as a service provider and an enabler aimed at improving access to quality social welfare services at the local, institutional and national level. The Government's Social Development Policy identifies management and administration, child care, adult care and the disabled as its four priority areas. The Department provides support and services to the disabled, the destitute, the poor and needy, victims of criminality, adults living with HIV/AIDS, and their families, victims of natural and social calamities, orphans and vulnerable children, and child victims of abuse and trafficking.

viii) The Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat

134. The Alternative Dispute Resolution Act, 2005, provides an alternative dispute resolution system in conformity with international rules on arbitration, conciliation and mediation and establishes an Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat to facilitate dispute resolution.

135. The affordability of the services of the Secretariat and the speed with which disputes are amicably resolved have attracted so many users that the Secretariat has embarked on a

programme of decentralization to cover all the Regions of The Gambia, with two pilot centres already established in two of the five Regions.

ix) The National Agency for Legal Aid

136. The National Agency for Legal Aid was established in 2008 by the Legal Aid Act. The Act provides for Legal Aid to be accorded to a person "charged with an offence.... which carries a punishment of death or imprisonment for life..." and to "a child... in proceedings in the Children's Court, brought by or on behalf of a child ..." (Section 30(1). The Act also provides for legal aid to be accorded to a person desiring "legal representation in any criminal or civil matter" and earning "not more than such minimum wage as the Government may specify" [Section 30(2)]. However, this latter provision will come into force on a date to be appointed by the Attorney-General by Order published in the Gazette.

137. The Agency is also mandated to "cause legal advice to be given free in any office of the Agency, court, police station or prison in any civil or criminal matter by legal practitioners appointed by or in the service of the Agency". [Section 30(4)].

x) The National Agency against Trafficking in Persons

138. The Trafficking in Persons Act, 2007 establishes the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons and makes it an offence for a person to engage in trafficking in persons, which is widely defined and includes the placement for sale, bonded placement, temporary placement for service, where exploitation by another person is the motivating factor, and transportation of another person within and across an international border for the purpose of exploiting that person's prostitution.

139. The Act also criminalizes the use of victims of trafficking, concealment of trafficking and the exportation and importation from and into The Gambia. It provides for the rights of a victim of trafficking "irrespective of his or her immigration status," to bring civil action and to compensation, restitution and recovery, and also makes provision for the temporary care and counselling of victims and their rehabilitation by Government.

xi) The National Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons

140. The Government has also established a National Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons, which meets regularly to plan and implement anti-trafficking campaigns. A shelter has been constructed for victims of trafficking and a 24 hour trafficking hotline has been established.

141. The Gambia is also a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Trans-national Organized Crime, the United Nations Trafficking Protocol, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

xii) The Child Sex Tourism Taskforce

142. Government has established under The Gambia Tourism Authority a Child Sex Tourism Taskforce to address problems associated with child sex tourism as well as the development of a Tourism Code of Conduct in 2005 and a brochure on the Tourism Offences Act, 2003. A Tourism Security Unit within the Police Department has also been established in addition to a Child Welfare Unit at the Police Headquarters and the provision of Child Welfare Officers in all Police Stations.

4. Invoking and enforcing provisions of human rights instruments

143. The Gambia maintains the dualist system/tradition of ratifying and domesticating the provisions of human rights instruments before they can be invoked before, or directly enforced by, the courts or other tribunals or administrative authorities.

144. However, provisions of undomesticated human rights instruments which are in consonance with provisions of the Constitution can be and have been invoked before the courts. Such provisions of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights have been invoked before the High Court of The Gambia.

5. Remedies available to victims of human rights violations

145. Section 37 of the Constitution provides for the enforcement of the fundamental human rights provisions provided in Chapter IV through the High Court, which may hear and determine any applications made and may make such orders, issue such writs, and give such directions as it may consider appropriate for the purposes of enforcing or securing the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights provisions.

6. Institutions with responsibility for overseeing the implementation of human rights

(i) Ombudsman

146. Section 163 of the Constitution provides for the office of the Ombudsman, which is empowered to investigate allegations of maladministration, mismanagement or discriminatory practices in any government department, authority, or other public body. The Ombudsman Act 1997 further empowers the Ombudsman, inter alia, to investigate complaints of injustice, corruption, abuse of powers and unfair treatment of any person by a public officer in the exercise of official duties.

147. The Office of the Ombudsman has also established a Human Rights Unit to address specifically human rights issues.

(ii) The National Women's Council, Women's Bureau and the National Women's Federation

148. These three institutions form the core of the machinery for the advancement of women and girls through the implementation of the National Policy for the advancement of Gambian Women and Girls and the provisions of CEDAW and the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa.

(iii) National Council for Civil Education

149. The NCCE conducts routine community meetings in towns and villages to educate the public on their constitutional rights, duties and responsibilities. It also conducts regular live radio and television programmes on topical issues relevant to good governance. It conducts voter education anytime elections are approaching to enable voters to make informed choices. It recently completed a one year pilot of the teaching of civic and human rights education in Gambian schools.

(iv) The Department of Social Welfare

150. The Department of Social Welfare has recorded successes in awareness raising, capacity building, training of partners on the promotion and prevention of child abuse and exploitation, protection of vulnerable adults and elderly persons.

151. Despite resource constraints, the Department is currently providing education sponsorship for 1,500 needy children. It is also providing 30 abandoned babies with foster

care, 150 children with shelter and support, 400 street children (almudos) with skills training and basic needs, 14 elderly persons with residential care and 20 persons with home-based care services, 5,000 disabled persons with artificial limbs and walking sticks and/or frames. It has also set up a child protection base for vulnerable children, a steering committee on orphans and vulnerable children and a National Action Plan on Orphans and Vulnerable Children. The Department also operates a child/family hotline and has trained 15 social workers on emergency preparedness. Social workers continue to provide the Children's Court with home study reports on young offenders appearing before this court.

(v) Persons with disabilities

152. Section 31 of the Constitution provides that "the right of the disabled and handicapped to respect and human dignity shall be recognized by the State and society." It provides further that "disabled persons shall be entitled to protection against exploitation and to protection against discrimination, in particular as regards access to health services, education and employment" and "in any judicial proceedings in which a disabled person is a party, the procedure shall take his or her condition into account."

153. A directive principle of State policy further enjoins the state to pursue policies that protect the right and freedoms of the disabled and other vulnerable members of society to ensure that such persons are provided just and equitable social opportunities.

154. The Gambia has not yet ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities but it has made strides in some areas. There are three recognized specialized schools for persons with disabilities: St. John's School for the Deaf, Methodist Special School for Children with Learning Difficulties and GOVI resource centre providing an education service for the visually impaired.

155. A number of Government agencies have been addressing the rights of persons with disabilities. These include the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, The Social Welfare Department, Ministry of Youth and Sports, etc. The National Planning Commission is also currently in consultation with the Disabled Peoples' Organization and The Gambia Federation of the Disabled to mainstream disability into Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Gambia Plan of Action on the African Decade for Persons with Disabilities is in the process of being endorsed. More than 13 non-governmental organizations and associations have also been working on issues affecting persons with disabilities.

7. Acceptance of the jurisdiction of regional human rights courts and other mechanisms

156. The Gambia has always accepted the jurisdiction of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, whose headquarters it hosts, the Court of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Court.

157. The following cases concerning The Gambia have been heard by the ECOWAS Court:

(i) Femi Falana & Ors. v. The Republic of The Gambia

Suit No. ECW/CCJ/APP/10/07

Action: Alleged violation of fundamental human rights arising from the erection of check points/toll gates in contravention of the Revised Treaty and Protocols on the free movement of goods and persons within the subregion.

Decision: Plaintiff's action failed for non-disclosure of cause of action against The Gambia. The Gambia was struck out as Defendant.

(ii) *Musa Saidykhan v. The Republic of The Gambia*

Suit No. ECW/CCHAPP/11107

Action: The Plaintiff's action was for alleged breach of his fundamental human rights by his wrongful and illegal arrest and detention for publishing the names of alleged coup plotters.

Decision: Judgment was delivered against The Gambia with an award of damages. The Gambia has since applied for a review of that decision. On 7 February 2013, the Court gave a ruling refusing the application. As it stands, Gambia has to pay the amount awarded of US$ 200,000.00.

(iii) *Chief Ebrima Manneh v. The Republic of The Gambia*

Suit No. ECW/CCJ/JUD/03/08

Action: Claim for breach of fundamental human rights by unlawful arrest and detention.

Decision: Damages of US$ 100,000 awarded against The Gambia.

The Gambia has applied for a review of the decision in the light of new exculpating evidence. The Court refused the application and The Gambia has an obligation to pay the sum awarded on the grounds that judgement was passed since 2008 and cannot be considered in 2011.

(iv) *The Registered Trustees of the Social Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) & Ors.*

v.

1. The Attorney - General of The Gambia

2. President of ECOWAS

Suit No. EW/CCJ/APP/08/09

Action: The Plaintiff sued the Defendants alleging breach of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty and Protocols when The Gambia suggested an amendment to the Treaty proposing that an appellate chamber be established to hear appeals from the ECOWAS Court.

Decision: The suit was struck out in favour of The Gambia based on a preliminary objection raised by The Gambia.

(v) *Dr. Emmanuel U. Njai v. H.E President A.J.J. Jammeh*

(Suit No.) ECW/CCJ/APP/09/10

Action: Claim for alleged breach of fundamental human rights against the President, whose aides were alleged to have stopped the Plaintiff from receiving his Social Security cheques from the United States, through the Embassy in The Gambia.

Decision: Action was struck out in favour of The Gambia with cost of US$ 10,000 against the Plaintiff.

(vi) *Media Foundation for West Africa v. The Republic of The Gambia*

Suit No. ECW/CCJ/AAP/15/10

Action: Claim for damages for alleged disappearance and suspected murder of Chief Ebrima Manneh by The Gambia.

Decision: The Gambia has filed a preliminary objection and on 7 February 2012, the Court ruled in favour of The Gambia. Accordingly suit was struck out on grounds that it was premature and that media foundation has no locus to sue and claim compensation for Manneh's death.

C. Framework within which human rights are promoted at the national level

1. The National Assembly

158. The National Assembly plays a very important role in the promotion and protection of human rights. The Constitution, for example, requires the National Assembly to review the desirability or otherwise of the total abolition of the death penalty in The Gambia. The Ombudsman is also required to report to the National Assembly annually on the performance of its functions. The President is required to attend a sitting of the National Assembly and address a session on the condition of The Gambia, the policies of the Government and the administration of the State. The National Assembly may also request the President to attend a sitting of the National Assembly to discuss an issue of national importance. It also exercises some oversight over the executive by holding Ministers accountable through urgent questions asked on the floor of National Assembly or through Committees of the National Assembly. The subcommittees of the National Assembly include the select subcommittee on women and children, which considers the gender dimensions on issues, policies and Bills brought before it relating to women and children.

2. National human rights institutions

159. Even though The Gambia does not have a National Human Rights Commission, the establishment of which is being pursued, there are other institutions, referred to earlier in this document, which are created for the protection and promotion of human rights at the national level. They are:

- Office of the Ombudsman;
- National Women's Council and its Bureau;
- National Women's Federation with regional branches throughout The Gambia;
- National Council for Civil Education;
- Independent Electoral Commission;
- GOVI resource centre providing for education services for the visually impaired;
- National Agency against Trafficking established under the Trafficking in Persons Act of 2007, a comprehensive legislation which seeks to prevent, suppress and punish those engaged in trafficking in persons, and to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of trafficking. The Agency is to ensure its implementation;
- The Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat; and
- National Agency for Legal Aid.

3. Dissemination of human rights instruments

160. The National Council for Civic Education is mandated to educate the citizens on international, regional and subregional matters, including human rights instruments to which The Gambia is a party. In addition, both Government and NGOs regularly conduct workshops and training on human rights. Prior to the domestication of human rights treaties

such as CEDAW, the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, nationwide awareness raising and sensitization programmes were undertaken to facilitate the promulgation of the Acts.

161. The Women's Bureau and other CSOs continue to raise awareness of the rights of women in all the Regions of The Gambia.

162. Posters highlighting human rights concerns such as violence against women and girls, the right to vote, right to property, right to education etc. have been used by NGOs and CSOs in their awareness raising campaigns.

4. Raising human rights awareness among public officials and other professionals

163. Hardly a month passes without a workshop, seminar or training programme being organised by Government and its development partners for public officials on issues of human rights and good governance. The United States Embassy regularly sponsors workshops for members of the Armed Forces on international humanitarian law; UNICEF is at the forefront in assisting Government's efforts to raise public awareness and indeed that of social workers, the police and members of the Children's Court on the rights of the child; UNDP provides valuable assistance to Government's drive to increase access to justice with resources to establish institutions such as the Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat (with regional Centres) and the National Agency for Legal Aid, and to train officials of those institutions; the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom Government has over the years assisted both the Ministry of Justice and the Judiciary in conducting training workshops for Lawyers, Judges and Magistrates. Other public officials are regularly sensitized on human rights issues relative to their sectors. Symposia on the benefits of education, particularly of the girl child, are organized by the Ministry for Basic and Secondary Education in cooperation with The Gambia Teachers Union, UNESCO and NGOs such as Concern Universal and Female Lawyers Association of The Gambia (FLAG).

5. Promotion of human rights awareness through educational programmes and Government sponsored public information

164. As stated in paragraph (3) above, the National Council for Civic Education is mandated to educate the citizenry on issues of human and peoples' rights. It conducts public awareness raising and sensitization activities on human rights and good governance countrywide. In addition, the National Council of Women with its Women's Bureau and the National Federation of Women, with branches in all the regions, are very active advocates of women's rights, encouraging women to pursue their rights guaranteed under the 1997 Constitution and the Women's Act, 2010. Child Protection Alliance, a group of youth, are encouraged and sponsored by Government to raise public awareness of the rights and responsibilities of the child. The Association conducts the annual meeting of the Children's Parliament and talk shows dedicated to issues affecting the welfare of children.

6. Promotion of human rights awareness through the mass media

165. With the increase in privately owned and community based radio stations the level of public discussion and awareness of issues affecting the population has noticeably increased. The State-owned radio and television services Gambia Radio and Television Services (GRTS) carry weekly programmes on issues such as health, particularly maternal and child health, environmental sanitation, women's and children's rights including domestic violence, harmful traditional practices, food and nutrition, malaria prevention, education, through the weekly "Education Forum" on television and other social issues.

166. The private and community-based radio stations complement the programmes of GRTS with weekly phone-in discussions on some of the issues highlighted above. Many of the programmes dealing with issues affecting women and children are conducted by women and children.

7. Role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations

167. The Government of The Gambia has been working on creating the enabling environment, especially for human rights organizations working on women issues. Organizations such as the Female Lawyers Association of The Gambia (FLAG) and GAMCOTRAP, for example have also been working on issues on women. FLAG continues to provide legal aid for some women in conflict with the law.

168. GAMCOTRAP has also been leading the campaign to end the practice of FGM in the country. On 5 December 2009, as many as 60 circumcisers from 351 communities in the Central River Region and Upper River Region made an open declaration relinquishing the practice of FGM by taking an oath that they would not practice it in their lifetime again. After relinquishing the practice, circumcisers normally take an oath that they would not practise FGM in their life again. GAMCOTRAP has conducted many similar exercises in the past and continues to do so. Circumcisers who "drop their knives" are also provided with compensation to engage in adequate employment opportunities.

8. Budget allocations and trends

169. Although data on budget allocations and budgetary trends for the implementation of The Gambia's human rights obligations are not available, the human rights activities of Ministries are generally funded from the national budget allocations to the Ministries and assistance from development partners, such as UNDP, UNICEF, USAID, the British Government, through IFAD, and Taiwan Province of China, to name of few, and both international and national NGOs such as the Child Fund (Formerly the Christian Children Fund), Action Aid, Concern Universal, Pro-Poor Advocacy Group, Female Lawyers Association of The Gambia (FLAG), GAMCOTRAP and other civil society organizations.

9. Development cooperation and assistance

170. In addition to the bilateral cooperation and assistance The Gambia receives from the partners mentioned above, other multilateral cooperation and assistance are an integral part of the Government's development efforts in providing the basic infrastructure for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights by its citizens. The Government's main pillars of development are in the areas of agriculture, education and health, and thus a large part of development assistance is devoted to those areas and the construction of roads to facilitate such development efforts.

Table 34
Glance on the Donor and GLF disbursements for 2010

Donor	*Commitment*	*Amount disbursed*	*% Disbursed*
AFDB	245 252 790.00	194 521 638.06	79.31475044
IDA	805 985 380.44	486 274 180.44	60.33287852
IDB	213 564 680.77	207 290 843.49	97.06232451
BADEA	210 237 330.10	60 237 330.04	28.65206194
IFAD	98 535 900.88	98 535 900.88	100
KFEAD	224 969 260.70	224 969 260.70	100

SFD	135 000 000.00	31 485 416.83	23.32253099
OPEC	538 483 026.00	499 421 771.90	92.74605657
EU/EDF	287 017 446.62	257 400 872.99	89.68126364
GLOBAL FUND	383 733 738.00	383 733 738.07	100
EXIM BANK - SDF	146 906 703.21	146 906 703.21	100

From the table, IFAD, KFAED, GLOBAL FUND and EXIM Bank had fully disbursed their commitments to projects concerned while IDS, OPEC and EU are over 90 per cent disbursement. It is only in the case of Saudi fund where there is serious under disbursement of about 23 per cent

Source: Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs.

10. Challenges and constraints

171. As in many developing countries in Africa, The Gambia's major constraint in the implementation of its human rights obligations nationally is the lack of resources to provide for all sectors adequately. The Gambia has no commercially exploitable mineral resources and has one of the lowest per capita incomes in the world. As one of the poorest countries, it occupies the 151st place out of 169 in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index (HDI) for the year 2010. Consequently, the allocation of resources to all sectors, including institutions dealing with human rights issues, has been affected.

D. Reporting process at the national level

172. The Government has established a Task Force on United Nations Human Rights Reports to Treaty Bodies, comprising some of the representatives of key government ministries and public institutions who participated in a three-day training workshop on Reporting to the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies, conducted by the office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights through the office of its Regional Representative for West Africa, from 17 to 19 May, 2011, in Banjul, The Gambia.

173. The Task Force under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice, worked closely with a consultant, contracted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in a participatory, hands-on manner, including the collection and collation of relevant information and statistical data for the reports.

174. In addition to the Task Force, there is imposed on all Government and public institutions a statutory duty under section 66 of the Women's Act, 2010, to submit annual reports to the Women's Bureau on their compliance with the Act to enable the National Women's Council to fulfil its statutory responsibility for the preparation of the periodic reports under CEDAW for submission to the Convention Committee. Members of the Task Force will serve as desk officers (contact persons) for the preparation of future reports under CEDAW and other treaty bodies of the United Nations.

175. All reports are validated at workshops to which all stakeholders, including CSOs and NGOs, are invited for their comments on the final drafts of the reports for discussion and incorporation in the final reports to be submitted to Government for submission to the relevant United Nations treaty bodies.

E. Other related human rights information

176. The Gambia has played and continues to play significant role in the promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights in the region. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Charter) derives its popular name, "The Banjul Charter" from

the fact that it was in The Gambia that the final draft of the Charter was prepared and agreed.

177. Following the adoption of the African Charter, The Gambia was the first member State of the then-OAU to submit a request to host the headquarters of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission), established under the African Charter for the protection and promotion of human and people's rights, which request was unanimously granted by the African Heads of States and Governments in a summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Since then The Gambia has hosted many of the African Commission's bi-annual sessions and continues to host every alternate session of the two sessions held annually.

178. Concurrently, with the establishment of the African Commission, the government of The Gambia provided seed money for the establishment of the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS) as an independent regional organization mandated to promote human rights through teaching, research, publication and documentation and to assist the African Commission in its promotional activities. After an initial period under the chairmanship of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, the ACDHRS changed its status to a non-government organization, completely independent of government, and, inter alia, providing an opportunity for NGOs from Africa and elsewhere to meet, discuss and interact with members of the African Commission before each session of the Commission, through its internationally acclaimed "NGO Forum on the Participation of Human Rights NGOs in the work of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights." Which the ACDHRS hosts twice yearly in partnership with other NGOs, particularly in those host countries where the African Commissions sessions are sometimes held.

179. The Gambia was the first country to sign the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in African, which it ratified with some reservations. However, following intensive sensitization and consultations with all stakeholders, including Islamic religious leaders, the reservations were withdrawn, and the provisions of the Protocol and of the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) have been domesticated by the recently enacted Women's Act, 2010. Among the other regional human rights conventions ratified by The Gambia are the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

180. On the subregional plane, The Gambia plays an important role in the activities of the Economic Committee of West African States (ECOWAS), hosting many of its workshops and seminars. The Gambia also hosts the ECOWAS Bureau for Early Warning & Response System - Zone 1, and has contributed to the peacekeeping missions of ECOMOG in the subregion. The Gambia's role in the United Nations peacekeeping missions in East Timor and in Darfur has been a source of pride for the country and its disciplined forces. The Gambia accepts the jurisdiction of the ECOWAS Court, and has been fully cooperating with it.

181. The Gambia is very committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on which it has premised many of its development policies and its vision 2020, and for which commitment was recently recognized in New York during the summit in 2011. The Gambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes (PRSP) I and II were based on some of the pillars of the MDGs, and its recently formulated Programme for Accelerated Growth and Employment (PAGE), 2012-2015 is also closely aligned with the MDGs.

182. The Beijing Platform for Action has provided a template for The Gambia's initiatives to achieve gender equality and equity and gender mainstreaming with laudable

results both nationally and internationally as evidenced by The Gambia hosting the Beijing + 10 meeting in 2010.

III. Information on non-discrimination and equality and effective remedies

183. The 1997 Constitution of The Gambia guarantees in Chapter IV the fundamental rights and freedoms of every person, whatever his or her race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national of social origin, property, birth or other status, subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.

184. Additionally, the Children's Act, 2005 provides for the protection and promotion of the rights and freedoms of the child generally without any distinction based on gender; and the Women's Act, 2010 protects the human rights of women by implementing the legal provisions of the National Policy for the Advancement of Gambian Women and Girls and incorporating and enforcing the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. These two Acts contain effective remedies for victims of discrimination, in addition to section 37 of the Constitution providing for the enforcement of its fundamental human rights provisions through the High Court, which may hear and determine any application made and may make such orders, issue such writs, and give such directions as it may consider appropriate for enforcing or securing the enforcement of any of the fundamental human rights provisions.

185. The Labour Act, 2007 is yet another legislation emphasizing the principle of non-discrimination in the labour force and providing sanctions against and remedies for the violation of this pri. ciple. It also provides for non-discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS in the labour force, a then-novel provision now widely expanded and comprehensively dealt with in the Draft HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Bill of 2010, which provides a legal framework for coping with HIV/AIDS in The Gambia and is now in the process of being promulgated into law.

186. Other institutions providing effective remedies against discrimination are the Office of the Ombudsman, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Secretariat, Women's Bureau, and the Department of Social Welfare, providing support and services to, among others, people with disabilities, adults living with HIV/AIDS and their families, and orphans and vulnerable children.

187. The Social Welfare Department in collaboration with the University of The Gambia and SOS Herman Gmeiner has conducted training up to diploma level for Social Workers. Sensitization and awareness creation workshops are conducted for teachers, law enforcement agents, nurses, social workers, religious and community leaders as well as children. Other measures undertaken by the Government to ensure a child-friendly environment include: the establishment of a Child Welfare Unit at the Police Headquarter, and the provision of Child Welfare Officers in all Police Stations; the establishment of 12 Community Child Protection Committees, 5 Neighbourhood Watch Groups and the Children's Court in the Kanifing Municipality; the creation of a Juvenile Detention Centre; and the provision of the Social Welfare hotline and the Shelter for Women and Children.

188. Affirmative Action by the top leadership has resulted in a Cabinet with 5 out of 15 (33 per cent) ministerial positions being held by women. The 2nd and 3rd highest positions in the Government are held by women: the Vice-President and Minister of Women's Affairs and the speaker of the National Assembly, which has been held by women in the current and previous legislative councils.

189. With respect to the National Assembly, there is provision for five nominated members and the President has mostly nominated women to these positions. Currently there are four female national assembly members - two are elected members and two women nominated, one of whom is the speaker.

190. In the current administrative system there are in top decision-making positions three female Permanent Secretaries, four Deputy Permanent Secretaries several Principal Assistant Secretaries and numerous Heads of Departments and Technical Directors in various sectors. In the diplomatic field there are 3 women heads of missions out of 19 and there are 2 deputy heads of mission for the first time in the history of The Gambia.

191. The Judiciary has benefitted from the application of affirmative action policies. The recent appointments of high court judges in September 2009 led to an increase in the number of female judges to 8 out of 11 (72 per cent). This is a remarkable achievement as it far exceeds the recommended 50 per cent. The Child Unit is also headed by a female state counsel who is also the gender focal person at the Ministry of Justice. The President of the Bar Association is also a woman.

192. Measures to improve the participation of women in democratic political elections resulted in remarkable outcomes in the 2007 local government (LGA) elections. For the first time in the political development of the country, 20 women contested the elections and out of this 15 won their seats. For women to participate in politics they need to have the confidence, the resources and the backing of their party and the support of the electorate. The women who were awarded party symbols contested and won the elections had all taken part in the Capacity Enhancement Training workshops 2007/2008 organized by the Women's Bureau and supported by UNDP.[2]

Figure
Percentage of Women in the National Assembly

193. Within the framework of decentralization, the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 provides for female representation in Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Ward Development Committees (WDCs) and calls for equal male and female representation on these committees. The Women's Bureau has decentralized its activities and the staff and women councillors work with these structures including others on the ground such as the Multidisciplinary Task Forces (MDFTs) the Population Task Forces (PTF) and the Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and CSOs, to mainstream gender into their activities. The Gender Focal Points Network has been revitalized to better facilitate gender mainstreaming efforts. In May 2006, the President endorsed the creation of a National Women's Federation, which aims to improve organizational effectiveness and participation of women in the private sector, through: strengthening

[2] Report on Capacity Assessment of Women in Decision Making, UNDP, Women's Bureau, January 2008.

women's groups at all levels; better coordinated programmes and activities; facilitating linkages for economic opportunities; and contributing to peace building. The provisions of the LGA 2002 notwithstanding however, women's participation in local government is very limited. There are no women governors, no female chiefs with only one female deputy governor.

194. Women constitute the majority (65.5 per cent) of the agricultural sector workforce compared to their male counterparts (47.5 per cent) out of a working population of 56 per cent who are engaged in agriculture.3 Important structural changes for women in the agricultural sector during the period under review include diversification of agricultural production into sesame growing and the adoption of short cycle species such as the New Rice for Africa (NERICA); rearing of exotic breeds and use of animal traction. The potential impact of NERICA on boosting production, reducing poverty and increasing food security is acknowledged by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).[4] A boost in horticultural production has resulted in the growing of high value tropical and off season fresh fruits and vegetables for both the domestic/tourist and export markets. Most of this growth is due to greater private sector involvement and investment as well as organized communal village based women vegetable growing schemes supported by donor funds such as the gardens in Bakau, Banjulnding and Sukuta. The Peri Urban Small Scale Improvement Project covers small holder production credit schemes for mixed farming systems with low input for fattening of small ruminants, poultry and rabbits and egg and diary production. The Banjulnding Women's Garden in the Western Region practices intensive breeding of exotic cattle in peri-urban areas. The scheme was promoted by the ITC under the PROCODEL Project which ended in 2005.

195. Access to productive resources including credit has been identified as a means of getting women out of the poverty trap. During the last 10 years, the Social Development Fund (SDF) has greatly facilitated women's access to micro-credit by disbursing funds totalling to 100 million dalasis (about US$ 3.8 million) 2000-2010 to Intermediary Micro Finance Institutions (IMFI) consisting of NGOs and CBOs who are registered with the Central Bank of The Gambia. The Gambia Women's Finance Association, (GAWFA), the National Association of Credit Unions of The Gambia (NACCUG), and the VISACAs have emerged as key players in the field of micro credit. CSIP support women groups with credit facility through the SDF from 2004 to date. Most of their clients are the rural poor, and 70 per cent of these are women with about 90 per cent of the lending going to women owned small enterprises. The repayment rates for microfinance loans have been in the range of 80 per cent to 90 per cent, indicating that loans to small borrowers with little collateral assets can still be successfully managed with the right institutional setting'. Capacity building activities are provided to enhance service delivery.

196. Under Phase 11 of the Fight against Social Exclusion (FASE) Project (2005-2006) approximately 16,109 (95 per cent women) direct beneficiaries and 120,000 indirect beneficiaries received enhanced income derived from higher quality of products and better managed enterprises as a result of the skills and business training and credit. In addition about 2,908 associations, trade organizations and SMEs also benefitted from the Project.

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[3] Light Poverty Study, National Planning Commission, 2008.

[4] FAO Assistant Director-General Hafez Ghanem in Africa's Food Challenge, FAO Media Centre, 2009

[5] PRSP 11.

Partnerships were developed with organizations involved in the fight against poverty such as the LGAs, SDF, CSIP, Government institutions[6].

197. CSIP provided 21 multi-purpose centres and 18 youth workshops constructed countrywide, equipped with solar and other equipments and handed over to the communities. Reports show that 72,303 have learnt various types of skills over the period out of which 31,990 (44.24 per cent) mastered the skills whilst 72.6 per cent are utilizing the skills[7].

198. Concern Universal through its Small Holder Irrigation for Livelihood Enhancement (SMILE) and The Gambia is Good (GIG) projects have greatly increased women's access to low cost technologies for drawing water and markets. The LIFE project implemented in 2004-2009 with 80 per cent female participation promoted the development of new gardens, rainy season vegetable production, compost manure making, planting of live fencing.

[6] End of Project Evaluation, Fight against Social and Economic Exclusion, UNDP, ILO and The Government of The Gambia, September 2006.

[7] Beneficiary Impact Assessment of CSIP, December, 2008.